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**THE TIMES**

## THE TIMES LITERARY SUPPLEMENT

MARCH 13, 1981

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GEORGE LAKOFF and MARK JOHNSON:  
*Metaphors We Live By*  
242pp. University of Chicago Press. £8.40.  
0 226 46800 3

Notoriously, books by linguists about language are heavy going—not just because they are abstruse, but because the use of language their authors make is characteristically opaque. Where you might reasonably look for verbal dexterity, even eloquence, you find prose that limps and plods. Why? There are two sorts of explanation, I think. The first is ideological. Verbal felicity is associated in the mind of the modern academic with the arts; with being an entertainer or connoisseur rather than a contributor to the stockpile of re-usable human knowledge. Skill in the deployment of words has come to be distrusted; and a sense of moral rectitude now hangs about sentences that have nothing in the world to recommend them beyond their claim to be true. To this extent, linguists are in the same boat as other victims of the symbolic wars that are waged within the academy: psychologists, sociologists, economists, historians—all of whom, in the recesses of their imaginations, feel naked because they cannot aspire to the unchallengeable legitimacy of the physicist or mathematician.

Most linguists write worse prose, though, than most of the rest of us. To explain the special lifelessness of what they commit to paper, one needs a further explanatory prong. This is more psychological, and centres on a curiosity of academic recruitment. Linguists are men and women, I suspect, who have been attracted to the academic study of language because language poses for them some particular personal awkwardness. In this, they are not exceptional. Men muddled about sex (like Havelock Ellis and Kinsey) become pioneers of sex research; men who dislike being photographed (like Cartier Bresson) become pioneers of intrusive photography; men and women who are insecure to paintings become art historians; men who dislike women become gynaecologists; and so on. We find it natural, it seems, to turn into a focus of academic inquiry those aspects of our personal lives that are perturbing or inscrutable. This is especially so among psychologists: a surprisingly high proportion of us

seem to have specialized in psychology because we are apprehensive of other people or baffled by them.

Granted that academics show this tendency to specialize in the study of their own deficiencies, one approaches *Metaphors We Live By*, fruit of a collaboration between a linguist and a philosopher, with caution. You expect to suffer and this expectation is one which the chapter-headings consolidate: "Metaphorical Systematicity: Highlighting and Hiding", "The Partial Nature of Metaphorical Structuring", and "How is our Conceptual System Grounded?" All the more pleasant the discovery, then, that what George Lakoff and Mark Johnson write makes sense. Their text is plain; so plain, to begin with, as to be a shade unnerving. Here are two professionals talking out loud to themselves, but doing so as though explaining to a blockhead the instructions for some simple familiar gadget. Their opening paragraph could scarcely be more solicitous:

Metaphor is for most people a device of the poetic imagination and the rhetorical flourish—a matter of extraordinary rather than ordinary language. Moreover, metaphor is typically viewed as characteristic of language alone, a matter of words rather than thought or action. For this reason, most people think they can get along perfectly well without metaphor. We have found, on the contrary, that metaphor is pervasive in everyday life, not just in language but in thought and action. Our ordinary conceptual system, in terms of which we both think and act, is fundamentally metaphorical in nature.

Quite so. Metaphors permeate thought, and thought guides action: propositions so obviously sensible, one would have thought, that only an emerald ideologue would seek to deny or doubt them. Yet, surprising though this may seem to those innocent of the perversities that sustain academic life, what Lakoff and Johnson say is not only true, it needs to be said. It is a matter of orthodoxy among professional linguists and philosophers, on both sides of the Atlantic, that the metaphor should be ignored. It follows that, in expounding the part that metaphors play in thought, Lakoff and Johnson have a sustained abuse of good sense to redress. To begin with, progress is excellent.

Happily, the authors proceed by means of examples: not the self-consciously pert variety beloved by English linguistic philosophers, but ones drawn, copiously, from everyday use. Their first exhibit, as well it might be, is the metaphor *argument is war*: "Your claims are indefensible", "he attacked every weak point in my argument", "I demolished his argument", "I've never won an argument with him", "if you use that strategy, he'll wipe you out", "he shot down all of my arguments". As Lakoff and Johnson say, "It is important to see that we don't just talk about arguments in terms of war... many of the things we do in arguing are partially structured by the concept of war." *Argument is war* is one of the metaphors we live by: it shapes the actions we perform when we argue. The point is plain if you imagine "a culture where an argument is viewed as a dance", in which the "participants are seen as performers, and the goal is to perform in a balanced and aesthetically pleasing way. In such a culture, people would view arguments differently, experience them differently, carry them out differently, and talk about them differently. But we would probably not view them as arguing at all". The same is true if arguments are seen not as wars or dances, but as journeys. If, on the other hand, arguments are seen as games, we are back where we began, because, in our culture, sport and argument are alike in that both are conceived of in terms of war.

The essence of metaphor, the authors stress, is understanding and experiencing one kind of thing in terms of another. The use we make of metaphors in shaping and regulating what we do is necessarily selective: "the very systematically that allows us to comprehend one aspect of a concept in terms of another... will necessarily hide other aspects of the concept". Often this selectivity is highly significant, not least in our discussion of language itself. The authors ascribe to Michael Reddy the discovery that we think about language as a *conduit*. We assume that ideas or meanings are objects; that linguistic expressions are containers; and that communication is a species of sending. The speaker puts ideas into words and sends them to a hearer who takes out of the words the ideas they contain. Again, examples come thick and fast: "It's hard to get that idea across to him"; "I gave you that idea"; "your reasons came through to us"; "it's difficult to put my ideas into words".

"when you have a good idea, try to capture it immediately in words", "try to pack more thought into fewer words", "his far, so good. Their own argument holds water, avoids going round in circles, and gets purposefully from A to B. It is just at this point, though, that the authors lapse seriously into long words: "Understanding such multidimensional gestalts and the correlations between them is the key to understanding coherence in our experience. As we saw above, experiential gestalts are multidimensional structured wholes. Their dimensions, in turn, are defined in terms of directly emergent concepts". I already know what a gestalt is, and they have told me what a directly emergent concept is, but whether I grasp what they are saying, I doubt.

The conduit metaphor colours our thinking about language so comprehensively that it seems to correspond immediately to what it describes. Yet its implications are often misleading or false. It implies that the meaning of words exists independently of context or speaker; it hides the fact that two people may understand the same words in different ways; it neglects the extent to which our use of words is riven with ambiguity and contradictions.

Lakoff and Johnson stress the omnipresence in our everyday language of the metaphors of physical orientation. The future lies in front of us, the past behind. The powerful, too, are always up, the weak always down: "I have control over her", "he's at the height of his power", "he's in the upper echelon", "his power is on the decline", "he is my social inferior". Further, we think of organizations as though they were buildings, one floor piled on top of another (not as horizontal arrays). We also think of theories as though they were buildings: "is that the foundation for your theory?", "the theory needs more support", "here are some more facts to shore up the theory", "we need to buttress the theory with solid arguments", "so far we have put together only the framework of the theory". These examples seem to me neatly chosen because although the building is the metaphor that regulates our thought about theories, it is one that is only partially employed. Conventionally, we use the foundation and outer shell of the building for this purpose, but ignore internal arrangements like rooms, plumbing and staircase. As a result, if we were to suggest that "complex theories usually have problems with the plumbing", our use of words would be seen as "figurative", not "literal". Yet, in truth, almost all our thinking about theories is figurative. It is just that some figurative usages are so familiar that we have come to accept them as literal.

Lakoff and Johnson look with some care at the ways in which rival metaphorical systems overlap and conflict. The sequence followed in an argument, for example, is sometimes a path (it goes

round in circles), sometimes a journey (it isn't getting us anywhere), sometimes a container (it doesn't hold water). And so on. Their own argument holds water, avoids going round in circles, and gets purposefully from A to B. It is just at this point, though, that the authors lapse seriously into long words: "Understanding such multidimensional gestalts and the correlations between them is the key to understanding coherence in our experience. As we saw above, experiential gestalts are multidimensional structured wholes. Their dimensions, in turn, are defined in terms of directly emergent concepts". I already know what a gestalt is, and they have told me what a directly emergent concept is, but whether I grasp what they are saying, I doubt.

The reason for this thickening of the prose is not far to seek. Philosophical problems that, so far, have lurked off-stage now move towards stage-centre. It is a moment to regret. Within a page, the authors touch on the most basic of the conceptual anxieties that a system of representation creates. What is it, they ask, for a concept, and in particular a metaphor, "to fit an experience"? Is this all-important fit, on which meaning and truth depend, entirely a matter of internal coherence, or is some external anchoring in prospect? Unfortunately, the going now gets heavier, and the whiffs of academic skrimshank grow stronger by the page. By the end of Chapter Eighteen, which is about strong and weak homonymy, I was struggling badly, and was beginning to experience frustration. If thought and action are guided by metaphor, and if our choice of metaphor is governed-as the authors insist—by the values of the culture in which we live, how do we "ground" our thought, except by cashing one metaphor in terms of another?

My spirits rose when, in Chapter Twenty-one, I reached the issue of innovation: the introduction of metaphors that are new. But, for the first time, the authors' choice of examples seems seriously to let them down. They elect to discuss love; the territory recently patrolled by Roland Barthes in *A Lover's Discourse*, and by William Gass in his remarkable *On Being Blue*. Lakoff and Johnson's new metaphor—love is a collaborative work of art—seems in comparison tame; and tangential, too, to the direction of their argument. They spell out

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some of this metaphor's implications: "love involves creativity". "love needs funding". They show that it highlights aspects of love neglected by its rivals: love is a journey, love is madness, love is health. They demonstrate that it is culturally specific, members of different societies detecting it in different connotations. And they endorse it, saying that it is a metaphor that, personally, they find telling. But in doing this, they contrive to portray love as akin to the collaborative efforts that members of a parent teachers association might make in building a new swimming-pool or cycle-shed. There is no hint here of the "closed image repertoire" described by Barthes; nor of the sentence as a container of erotic consciousness, freighted, as Gass suggests, with meanings otherwise inexpressible. Nor, again, is there any illumination of the eminently tricky relationship, dwelt on by Gass, between the work of art and the life of the person driven to fashion it; doubly tricky, one would have thought, if two artists are at work, colluding together to escape the prosaic.

When, at last, Lakoff and Johnson do grapple with the question of truth, the metaphor's relationship to what it characterizes, what they say is forthright, but it is also worrying: "... things in the world do play a role in constraining our conceptual system. But they play this role only through our experience of them ..."; and "... the only kind of similarities relevant to metaphors are experiential, not objective, similarities". Perhaps the long wait had made me jittery, but these propositions struck me as unsettling. By any standards, "experiential" is a slippery notion; and as they stand, Lakoff and Johnson's claims could well be tautologies—after all, evidence is by definition part of our experience, otherwise it would not be evidence. Yet if not tautologies, such assertions are dangerous, in that they seem to sell the pass fairly comprehensively to the "cave phenomenologists"—those who believe that, outside science, all questions of meaning and truth are matters of opinion.

The difficulty lies, I think, in what Lakoff and Johnson take seriously. Correctly, they reject as myths both the "objectivist" and the "subjectivist" schools of thought that, for a century or more, have served to polarize and stultify academic deliberations about the meaning and truth of the words we use: the "objectivist" school that "takes as its allies scientific truth, rationality, precision, fairness and impartiality", and the "subjectivist" school that is rooted in Romanticism, and "takes as its allies the emotions, intuition, insight, imagination, humaneness, art, and a 'higher truth'". Their own concerns, however, are much more with the first than the second; symptomatically, while they devote twenty-seven pages to a rebuttal of "objectivist" doctrines, they dismiss the "subjectivist" alternatives in two.

In place of these unhelpful bodies of belief, what Lakoff and Johnson advocate is an "experiential synthesis" in which a theory of meaning and a theory of truth are rooted in the notion of understanding. They set out, in other words, to steer a course between Scylla and Charybdis, between the "objective" and the "subjective". But in doing so, while watching Scylla through narrowed and expert eyes, they have seemed to me to stray much closer to Charybdis than they imagine.

If they mean what they seem to mean, Lakoff and Johnson concede that no anchoring of metaphorical thought in solid evidence can seriously be envisaged. They

allow that metaphors can be true or false, but insist that truth is inseparable from the categories we bring to bear on our experience in order to make sense of it: "We understand a statement as being true in a given situation when our understanding of the situation closely enough for our purposes". Yet if an "experiential" view of the truth is to earn its keep, it must offer some account of the ways in which we discriminate sensible constructions of the world from those that are ill-founded, high-handed, doctrinaire, or barren; and this, to my satisfaction, Lakoff and Johnson do not do. If I believe that Professors Lakoff and Johnson are agents of the Jewish Gestapo, and that they are pumping poisoned gas into my typewriter, this belief may explain to my satisfaction why I am making so many mistakes; but its success in performing this interpretative function makes it no less barmy, no more true.

In the end, I was obscurely disappointed with *Metaphors We Live By*, and for two sorts of reason. The authors are right: any theory of language that ignores metaphor ignores most of language. Their criticisms of "objectivism" in its various guises seem sound too. But in backing the "experiential" horse, they are less forthcoming than they might be about how "things in the world" shape and regulate our experience of them. They are also oddly reluctant to offer the more superstitious among the "objectivists" the comforts that are easy to give. As Lakoff and Johnson say, the scientifically-minded fear metaphor and rhetoric, seeing both as weak spots in the dyke; renit through which a great tide of unreason could flow. Yet, as the early chapters establish, metaphors are no more a threat to the rationality of philosophy or linguist than models, theories, interpretative frameworks and heuristic devices are to the psychologist or computer scientist. Far from discouraging talk of evidence and of falsification, they positively invite it. The parallel between models and metaphors would in any case have been a valuable one to stress because, in biological and social science especially, models are usually metaphors in this disguise.

Sadder still, granted the excellent good sense of these early chapters, is what I take to be a weakening in the authors' sense of design. The natural path to have followed, in the eliciting stages of their argument, would have been to articulate the metaphors underlying "objectivism", to articulate the metaphors underlying "subjectivism", and then to wheel out a spanking new "experiential" metaphor of their own, one demonstrably superior to theirs. I am guessing, but my suspicion is that *Metaphors We Live By* was written at speed, and that the traditional loyalties of academic warfare reassured themselves as drafting proceeded. The outcome is a splendid initiative half-squandered. What, a hundred pages earlier, had looked like an argument, solid if not stylish, that was moving towards a dénouement of genuine economy and conviction, is left in the end broken-backed. There is even the seeking suspicion that Lakoff and Johnson were drawn to the topic of metaphor, not because it is centrally placed and given, an aspect of the mind's workings that anyone interested in language must come to terms with, but because it is a handy stick with which to beat old professional enemies. Whatever the case, the clarity of those early chapters is lost; and the stale murk of the academy reasserts itself well before *Metaphors We Live By* ends.

## Matters of local interest

By D. M. Thomas

DOUGLAS C. D. POCKOCK (Editor)  
Hemlock and Literature  
Essays on the Experience of Place  
224pp. Croom Helm, £14.95.  
0 7099 0193 3

This collection of essays on literature by thirteen academic geographers represents a pioneering effort to make use of the insights of writers in the scientific study of the human environment. It is intended primarily for the geographer, but the hope is expressed that students of literature, too, will find it valuable. "A new dimension to the interpretation of literature". The editor's opening statement of his aims might, however, arouse scepticism in such students: Imaginative literature, a relatively small subset of the vast heterogeneous field of the printed word, has recently been espoused ... by a growing band of geographers seeking alternative perspectives and insights in the study of man-environment relationships. Disillusioned by an era of logical positivism, maybe shell-shocked by the quantitative revolution, perhaps rediscovering the literary heritage of geography—whatever the reason, the realm of literature has attracted increasing attention from our eclectic discipline.

The first sentence is an undeniably truthful statement of literature's modest place in the total mass of printed matter, but the manner of its expression—"a relatively small subset"—suggests that it may be difficult for the social scientist to make real contact with works of art which explore the wholeness of life, intuitively, intellectually and emotionally. Further scepticism is induced by the editor's faulty grammar in the second sentence. It is not pedantic to expect a scientific writer to demonstrate clarity of thought in its basic form: correct syntax.

Most of the essays confirm these doubts. With a few exceptions, the writers seem uncertain of what they are doing, and why. The uncertainty is often masked by a mass of annotations. The authors rarely give the impression of being alive to the density of a literary work—to that which distinguishes it from other "subjects", such as journalism. Thus, Christopher L. Salter summarizes his study of Steinbeck's *The Grapes of Wrath* in a way which suggests that a *Reader's Digest* précis of the novel, or an American farmer's diary, would serve the geographer's purpose just as well: "To the reader of fiction who is also attempting to comprehend something of the underlying systems in this chaos of conflict and flight, the study of this novel provides a window on geographic phenomena broadly ranging from mental maps to economic infrastructures." David Seamon, in his exploration of "existential outdoors and indoors" in two books by Doreen Lee, treats both books as if *Pursuit of the Green* and *Yet One* in *Pursuit of the English*, is Doreen Lee's journalistic account of her arrival in Britain from Africa, and the other, *The Four-Cornered City*, is a novel, describing a similar arrival but in fictional terms. It is not surprising that the essay labours to point out the obvious: "Existential incidences" means little more than being a Cockney and feeling at home in London, and "existential outsidership" means not being a Cockney and not feeling at home in London.

But as one might expect from a heterogeneous collection of essays on literature by geographers, there is also a very wide range of knowledge and sensitivity. Two essays show "little or no high level of sophistication": "Of Truth or Clouds", a study of Ruskin's absorption in the "inscape" of cloud-formations, by Denis Cosgrove and John E. Thomas; and "Nineteenth-century St. Petersburg", by Howard F. Andrews. The Ruskin essay shows how to the minds of certain Victorian writers natural phenomena were shadows of the face of God; though even the shadow of the deity was beginning to disappear behind industrial smoke as the century drew on. Before reading this essay I didn't know how beautiful were Ruskin's descriptions of changing cloud-shapes, nor how close in spirit they are to Hopkins's poetry. The authors evidently did know it, though, quoting lines from "Hurrahing in Harvest" as an epigraph (for rather, misquoting them, an unnecessary blurb on an attractive and useful essay). Andrews's essay on St. Petersburg, subtitled "Workings for an Exploration of Image and Place", is even better. He finely captures the spirit of the Russian capital, in its air of unreality and abstraction, and peculiar intensity, as "Peter's

creation" clattered, like the hoofbeats of the Bronze Horseman himself, through the transforming visions of Pushkin, Gogol, Dostoevsky, and Bely. (He might, with advantage, have added Blok.) No other city, not even Venice, hovers so delicately between the real world and the world of art. Akhmatova even used Dostoevsky's name as an epithet for her native city: "the city, demented and dusty, ...". Andrews catches the genius loci, has read the literature with enthusiasm and perception; and, in using the word "workings", is clearly not hiding superficial knowledge behind a convenient formula, but could indeed go on to write much more.

It is probably no accident that these two essays are well-written. Stylish also, and successful in that they know what they are modestly trying to achieve, are Catherine A. Middleton's scannable essay on roots and rootlessness in George Eliot's novels, and Hugh C. Prince's affectionate study of the atmosphere of place in George Crabbe's poetry. This, the only essay on a poet, would serve as a useful introduction to readers unfamiliar with Crabbe, and demonstrate in quite a simple way how there is more to a landscape than contours and grid-references.

An essay by Peter T. Newby on literature and the growth of tourism—mainly West Swarth and Scott Fitzgerald—is as fragile as a Wordworth daffodil or Fitzgerald's final glass. Literature scarcely extends upon Kenneth Olwig's strange account of the re-affirmation of the Jutland Heath Stranger still—much, much stranger—play beyond Monty Python in fact—a *Green* Olsson's "On Yearning for Home: an Epistomological View of Outlier Transformations". I quite admit some who can get the two words I just stand, and least like, into his title, but his "essay" has to do with either geography or literature I don't know (I suspect editor didn't know either). The piece is incomprehensible from beginning to end. Here is a sample:

He who cannot straddle the line between the complexity of the inside and the simplicity of the outside is defined as a neither belonging nor not-belonging, whose communication is devoid of any rules becomes a category in himself. So it is that the tragic hero is caught in a predicament, the schizophrenic is torn, social crisis in alienation. To be stuck is in this context to be confined to one level alone in the theory of types. To be stuck is no joke, for to joke is to play with logical types. What does it mean to turn for home? Jokingly serious, seriously joking? Joker trumps the mean. Follow suit!

Dr Olsson is Professor of Geography at Planning at the Nordic Institute of Building, Stockholm. I think he would rather be a poet. And he does strike off one second of real poetry: "But what I remember is that I know the roundness of the moon, my hand before I throw it and the shape of the grass in which I was hiding from the chasers." I forgive him, for that. I hope him, too, because he is hilarious.

Ian G. Cook's essay on D. H. Lawrence did not make me laugh; rather, its dogmatism and ignorance made me feel at the window of Siberia. To Dr Cook, Lawrence's great failing is that "he shied away from analysis of society in his writings, compared to Marx for example". Lawrence's portrayal of the working classes is too good, not simplistic enough. His first review of *Lady Chatterley's Lover* was so assured, the most "true to experience values" in that the "great struggle between the communist and the capitalist was a real struggle, not a mere ideological device, as Lawrence leaves the estate. (But then, in general, Cook has the peculiar notion that a novel moves further away from reality as it goes on and re-writes, adjusting to the demands of the public and of his publishers: in other words, the opposite happens, as genuine writers are concerned). But one from this brief concession to "reality" might say "socialist realism"—Lawrence betrayed his class origins. Bertrand Russell is pulled in, to "prove" that Lawrence was fascist: "Indeed, Bertrand Russell was fascist: Lawrence of fascism, and that (also) Lawrence had developed the whole philosophy of fascism from the politicians had thought of it ... Russell maintained that the philosophy was one that 'had strength in the deep dark features and symbols of the novel, but it became prey to the consciousness of society to which the philosophy can lead.' Yes indeed—studying literature was most guard against everything which literature is. Cook's essay is appalling in its stupidity, as well as being disagreeable. The editor should have rejected it on grounds of style, if he could not reject it on grounds of content.

The two, in fact, go together. The jargon-ridden style of many of the essays in the volume is a depressing indication of the cultural split in our society. Many of them are not all—of these humanistic "aphers sound de-humanized, or at least fully human. Paradoxically, this very even, very expensive book illustrates the pressing need for the social sciences to develop a more imaginative literature. To the extent, this book is welcome, as a clumsy attempt.

by William J. Lloyd. He studies the city in terms of the hierarchy of its unbalance, as suggested by several temporary novels; and shows that the middle classes were always being pushed into the urban environment they hated. But the mediocrity of the novelists has selected works against depth of insight. Henry James is only briefly mentioned, is described as "one of the most important authors to be considered here". His praise, considering that the other novels are William Dean Howells, Helen Hunt Arthur Stinson Pier, Edward Bellamy, Hamlin Garland and Herckiah Haleworth.

Sevyan Vainshtein's *Nomads of South Siberia: The Pastoral Economics of Tuva*. Edited by Caroline Humphrey. Translated by Michael Colenso. 289pp. Cambridge University Press. £20. 0 521 220890 0

Tuva appears to be a genuine nomadic Shangri-La, insulated by mountains nearly 4,000 metres high to the south, and another range reaching up to over 2,500 metres to the north. The first Russian embassy reached it in 1616, and the first nominal submission of a local ruler to Moscow occurred astonishingly early, in 1634, but, as the author observes, had little real significance. Tuva was subsequently incorporated in the Manchu empire. The Chinese revolution of 1911 freed it, but in 1914 it became a Russian protectorate. The Russian Revolution and its aftermath left Tuva in a kind of political limbo, included in neither the Soviet Union to the north nor in Outer Mongolia to its south, and endowed with a "popular democratic" government, which lacked either the will or the means to transform its society effectively. The book under review, alas, tells one little of the political history of the inter-war period, which in effect ended in 1944 with the reincorporation of Tuva into the Soviet Union as an Autonomous Region, and subsequent promotion in 1961 to an Autonomous Republic.

Tuva's period in limbo, though not investigated in this book for its own sake, meant that a great deal of the traditional nomadic way of life survived there much later than it did elsewhere: in 1930, for instance, over 80 per cent of the Tuvians were still nomads. The Tuvians are culturally similar to the Mongols, though linguistically closer to the Turkish family, and their special position during the inter-war period thus offered something approaching the possibility of time-travel to the age and land of Genghis Khan. Sevyan Vainshtein, a Moscow anthropologist, has been carrying out intensive ethnographic work among the Tuvians since the early 1950s, when his relatively pristine period was still in the recent past. His study is of very great interest for the light it throws on Mongol-society society, on Eurasian nomadism generally, and indeed on the handling of the problem of nomadism in Soviet anthropological thought.

Nomads are a nuisance, and not only to a centralizing state, they are awkward even for theory, or at any rate for Marxist theory. As the centre of Marxism, there is a coherent, elegant and inspiring vision of human history and destiny. It could be called an eschatology and theology of the future: mankind starts with a primordial community in which man is true to his nature; he then loses this community, but eventually returns to it after a painful and turbulent voyage, which enables humanity to recover its essence at a new, culturally and economically higher level. Thus the intervening stages, however painful, are justified and worthwhile: we do not suffer in vain. How and why were we expelled from the first Eden? Original sin was class formation—systematically differential access to the means of production—and this brought in its train the state and political oppression, which, in the last analysis, are engendered only by the need to protect and fortify the inequalities of a class-endowed society. Happily for mankind, however, the socio-economic and political structures so generated have "inner stresses" and are inherently unstable, and their internal strains propel them by a series of steps and eventually they destroy themselves altogether, and a humane condition, without either differential access to resources, or its political cover, or its ideological cover-up, is finally restored.

At the time when this vision crystallized, it had an undeniable plausibility. It was a tolerable fit with the salient features and aspects of Western history which were enshrined in the minds of the men who elaborated it. They were not in the least untrue of nomads in Asia and Africa; but all the same, their doings were not at the centre of that attention. But it was inevitable that, sooner or later, Marxists would also have to develop a sociological theory of nomadism. For very obvious reasons, it was inevitable that Russians should do so; the Marxist and subsequently Soviet states either incorporate or border on some of the most important and famous of nomadic societies; and the Russian mind, whether through genuinely continuous folk-memory or through its reproduction in literature and education, has a profound sense of the importance and menace of nomadic societies. The Polovni or the Tatars are the ultimate enemy.

On quite a number of counts, nomads do not comfortably fit with the Marxist vision. Their social order seems to be stable, not to say stagnant. It is questionable whether nomads, when not fused with non-nomadic groups, have ever engendered a radically new, "higher" social form. Not to put too fine a point on it, they seem an unprogressive lot, capable at best of cyclical change. Like the Asiatic Mode of Production, they seem to undermine the hope of eventual salvation through endogenously guaranteed social stress and change. They are also anomalous internally, in their own social order. Often they are rather egalitarian, at any rate in comparison with most agrarian societies. They frequently resist or evade the state, and they are not strangers to fraternity, which Ibn Khaldun called *asabiya*.

Are they then the home of equality, liberty and fraternity? Not by any means; but even if they were, this would still be very awkward. They are either too late or too soon, premature eager beavers or sluggish laggards on the *wellstehischer* timetable. Given their private property in animals and their rapacity, it is difficult to claim nomads for the primordial community; yet given their collective ownership of pasture, it is awkward to classify them with a social form allegedly based on a class monopoly of land. Slave-owning then? The fact that a Khan, or for that matter Scythian chief, had a few slaves in his household (while the great majority of the society remained free middle-stratum tribesmen) makes this into a slave-owning society about as much as an inter-war sheikh's Rolls-Royce made his bedouin into an industrialist society.

Moreover, their ability to dispense gleefully with the state on many occasions is matched by their notorious capacity at other times to establish powerful, sometimes enormous empires. If the same kind of nomad is capable of both extremes, this would seem to disturb any theory which explains the emergence and persistence of the state in terms of its non-political roots in the socio-economic substructure.

*Nu, shito dyelat?* The main strategies available are either to graft the nomads back into the primordial community or forward into some recognized class-endowed social form. Neither categorization suits comfortably, nomads being too exploitative for the former, and not quite exploitative enough, at any rate at home and among themselves, for the latter. In a concluding chapter specially written for this English translation in 1977, Vainshtein tells us something of the wide variety of positions adopted on this issue in the Soviet Union. An important scholar (Vladimir G. Litvinov, Zlatkin, Potopov, and others), whose main works were published in the 1930s, endeavoured to attribute nomads, and diverse kinds of Mongol in particular, to feudalism. "Some scholars have suggested that feudalism passes through the same stages in the nomadic context as it does amongst non-nomadic peoples, and that growth in productive capacity leads to the birth of new towns, which are the centres of craft production."

Were this true, nomadism would of course cease to present a theoretical problem. But a later school has subjected these views to searching criticism. Its notable members are Tolybekov (who has worked

on Kazakh), Markov (present holder of the Chair of Ethnography in Moscow, and author of an important comparative study of Asian nomads), and, although Vainshtein does not mention him, A. M. Khazanov, social historian of the Scythians and author of an excellent study of pastoral nomadism in general, due to be published in English, and which continues the line of argument found in Tolybekov and Markov. The "feudal" view is open to the objection that the evidence for private control of land is based generally on later periods in the history of nomadic peoples, when they had been forcibly incorporated in a state based on sedentary areas, and not on genuine nomad customary law; and also on the fact that the attribution of class to these societies was obliged, on the one hand, to ignore the extreme precarity of individual family pastoral occupations and hence the marked instability of social stratification, and on the other, to over-stress the importance of the few sedentary paupers and the very rich, to the detriment of a usually much more typical middle stratum of tribesmen.

Vainshtein's own material certainly suggests that the Manchu empire succeeded in imposing an administrative and tax-extracting structure on the Tuvians, which "gradually replaced the genealogical principle of nomadic groups". (Unfortunately he does not tell us much about the use of Buddhism and lamaseries by the Manchu polity. Where the European church of the dark ages was a shadow state, it looks as if the Buddhist church might have constituted a shadow craft economy inserted among the nomadic segments.) But his conclusion, at the end of what was originally the final chapter, seems to place him on the side of those who would exclude nomads from the canonical social-evolutionary sequence. He affirms that despite the presence of craft skills, craft production was unable to separate itself from agricultural or pastoral production in this kind of milieu, and hence further development was blocked. When such separation had occurred, as it did during the great Mongol empire, it was tied to fragile, externally imposed conditions and disappeared again when these ceased to operate.

In her valuable introduction to the translation, Caroline Humphrey comments on the general implications of Vainshtein's material, and while stressing that she may be oversteating points which he does not explicitly assert himself, reaches the following conclusion: "There were no transformations in the technology of herding nor of agriculture, nor of craft and commodity production, which account for the rise and fall of the steppe empires". It looks as if this kind of society did not spontaneously generate socio-economic change, but that such change as does reach it is a consequence of military-political change, which in turn can occur spontaneously or arrive from outside, without any roots in the local relations of production. Nomad political activism thus has neither roots nor permanent fruits, Marx himself quoted Goethe:

Sollte diese Qual was quellen  
Das sie unser Lust vermehrt  
Hat nicht Myrtilde Seelen,  
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## Anomalies of no fixed abode

By Ernest Gellner

SEVYAN VAINSHTEIN:  
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Das sie unser Lust vermehrt  
Hat nicht Myrtilde Seelen,  
Timurs Herrschaft angezeigt?

Should we reproach ourselves for being beneficiaries of the havoc wrought by Timur Lene? On this view, the situation is even more regrettable: the havoc achieved nothing. Its beneficiaries need not feel guilt, for there are no beneficiaries. Nomad history has no meaning, no aim. The suffering it inflicted makes no contribution to the redemption of mankind.

## Love Poem

From my belly or thigh  
An love evaporates.  
Lift with your fingernail  
A flake of rice-paper.

Weigh what meat there is  
On the skin of a wren,  
The marrow full of air,  
The feathers full of rain.

Michael Longley

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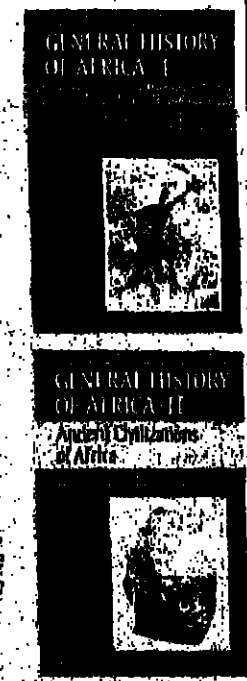
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of separate nation, he feared that the effective unity of the nation-state would be fatally undermined by even quite mild forms of Home Rule; he always denounced federalism as an inherently weak form of government for similar reasons. With the publication in 1886 of *England's Case Against Home Rule*, Dicey immediately became and thereafter remained the leading Unionist constitutional expert, though Cosgrave was warring in showing how Tory leaders made use of his arguments only as and when it suited them to do so. The central claim about the distorting strength of his Irish preoccupation is perhaps best borne out by the splendid sight in 1911 of the country's leading authority on constitutional law not only condoning threatened unconstitutional action to preserve the Union, but also citing Burke on the constitutional propriety of invoking the royal prerogative, in the hope that the king could then dissolve Parliament and invite the Unionist minority to take office.

Fortunately, there was far more to Dicey than his denunciations of Home Rule. He propounded an interpretation of the constitution — which in 1885 meant, implicitly, a reading of the distinctive nature of the English polity — which had authoritative status thrust upon it immediately. Gladstone could cite it as such in Parliament as early as April 1886, though thereafter he became understandably reticent about invoking this particular authority, preferring to cite Bryce's historical research which conveniently, though hardly accidentally, told in favour of Home Rule. One way of characterizing Dicey's achievement, and at the same time helping to explain its immediate popularity, would be to say that he combined the core of the Whig interpretation of English history with an essentially Utilitarian vision of politics, and presented the result as a dispassionate analysis of the distinctive features of the existing constitution. The Whiggish character of his account has long been recognized: fifty years ago Ivor Jennings made it the basis of his revisionist criticism. But the Utilitarian hereditage may be less apparent.

It is, in fact, discernible in matters of both method and substance. Dicey's formulation of the doctrine of the sovereignty of Parliament, as well as the style of deductive analysis which the book deployed, revealed the formidable intellectual presence of John Austin. Considering that the portion of Austin's lectures entitled *The Province of Jurisprudence Determined* was very largely ignored when first published in 1832, and that the complete *Lectures on Jurisprudence* were only published in 1861, two years after his death and in the same year in which Maine's *Ancient Law* launched the quite contrary style of historical jurisprudence on its immensely successful career, and considering that no one, not even his most faithful disciples, has ever felt able to describe Austin's writings as easy or attractive, it is remarkable how many late-nineteenth-century writers on history and politics, as well as on jurisprudence more narrowly defined, devoted a very considerable part of their energies to extricating themselves from the intellectual bindweed of his definitions and distinctions.

But while Maine, Maitland, Pollock and Bryce all attempted to discredit the supposed universal purchase of Austin's categories by exploring the sheer historical variety of types and conceptions of law, Dicey, Cosgrave insists, remained faithful to the central Austinian conception of law as a command of the sovereign. On this score, he refused, for example, to consider any internal law as law properly speaking, and he publicly maintained that the province of the Oxford chair of Jurisprudence (of which Maine and Pollock were the first two occupants) was not law at all, but "the oddities or colliding portions of legal edifice". In similarly Austinian vein he always considered the study of law as one of "the logical sciences" (it is interesting though unsurprising to learn that in the first year of his Fellowship at Trinity, Oxford in 1860 he chose to lecture on Mill's *System of Logic*), and Cosgrave has a particularly good section on Dicey's continued indifference or even hostility to the prevailing fashion for historical studies. He only had any true for history if, in the tradition of ambitious nineteenth-century positivism, it established general laws, a philosophy by both temperament and intellectual allegiance, he dismissed history which failed this test as "unscientific". It is characteristic that after hearing (or perhaps not: he did become very deaf) Maitland's incoherent Ford Lectures, published as *Township and Borough*, he should testify grudgingly: "His results might easily be stated with greater clearness and his antiquarian researches have little more to do with law than with theology — perhaps not so much."

A follower of Austin and Mill in matters of method, Dicey was, as he described himself, "an unrepentant Benthamite" in his general social and political views. By this he meant, above all, that he was committed to what was then described as an "individualist" view of the proper relation between the state and the individual. As he construed it, "the rule of law" constituted the chief instrument for securing the desired balance in this relationship. For, the corollary of its widely-remarked denial of discretionary powers to governments or officials was the fact that the ordinary citizen, too, was expected to obtain redress for his grievances through the courts. Contract thus formed the linch-pin of the individualist social order, a conception which in turn depended upon regarding the law, and a willingness and ability to use it, as the main public means by which rational self-regarding individuals protected their own interests. That this assumption was what actually gave the rule of law its content in Dicey's mind became evident when the law embodied, as it increasingly did, undeniably contrary presuppositions. When in 1906, for example, members of trade unions were granted effective immunity for torts committed in pursuit of a trade dispute Dicey regarded it as an undermining of the very principle of the rule of law itself.

Of course, there is a case for saying that there was nothing inherently individualist in the late-nineteenth-century sense, about Utilitarianism: the logic of the theory could be construed as easily in a dirigiste direction as in its opposite. But Dicey's identification of Benthamism with individualism was part of that late-nineteenth-century construction of an earlier Utilitarian orthodoxy which has plagued historians ever since. This construction involved not only attributing an overly simple and homogeneous set of political views to the various figures who could be said to have owed some intellectual allegiance to Bentham, but also hypostatizing a common and widely-shared deductive method. When Dicey wrote that "political economy and jurisprudence were between 1830 and 1850 little more than branches of Utilitarianism", he was projecting back into the first half of the century an identity which had only really coalesced as such in the methodological disputes of the second half.

This is surely also the way to approach the connection with his other monument, *Law and Opinion*. Memory (or an artificial substitute like genealogy) is crucial to identity in politics as well as personal terms. Dicey's book — written, as he himself said, primarily for a very small group of his mid-Victorian contemporaries — is an example of that tendentious re-working of the past which was a necessary part of being an individualist by 1900. Since the categories of "individualism" and "collectivism" have been discarded, no doubt rightly, guides to the realities of mid-nineteenth-century legislation, Dicey's book is now dismissed as a "muddle". But just as we take Herbert Spencer's rather brisk history of the rise and fall of Liberalism since the reign of Charles II as evidence about Spencer and the debate to which he was contributing rather than as an authoritative guide to the course of English history, so, too, Dicey's book needs to be seen in its polemical context. Reconstructing what he and his contemporaries thought they were arguing about at the end of the century does not entail accepting their categories as objective and accurate descriptions of the legislative practice of the previous two generations, but it does mean that we have to recognize how these terms structured the perception of political disagreement in their own time.

Here, as in his attitude to Ireland, Dicey's understanding was governed by the tendency to narrow legalism which seemed so much the dominant characteristic of his thinking. A powerful but pedestrian intelligence united with limited and unresponsive sensibilities, equally lacking in either the metaphysical itch or any strong imaginative life — the portrait of his mind as it is allowed to emerge in this book is hardly an inviting one. He accurately described himself, with redeeming self-deprecation, as "the prophet of the obvious". Freely immersed in the daily reports of party politics, though with little feel for the realities of that activity, he seems to have found a kind of emotional satisfaction in mastering what he took to be the fixed and enduring element in the shifting scene. The consequent rigidity appears in his continuing reliance on the only proper (or even necessary) course of action in Ireland was for it, like the rest of the country, to be governed through the courts, "to maintain in Ireland the supremacy of the law... at any cost". It is also detectable in some of his more extreme

responses, such as his demand that workers advocating strikes in wartime should be tried for treason, an echo of the remark in his first work on the Privy Council over fifty years before which had hinted that impeachment might still have a role to play in curbing modern governments. Balfour was not what distinguished any of his later works: he passionately denounced the Hammonds' trilogy on the Industrial Revolution for its "belief in the delusions of the Bolsheviks". Was the academic equivalent of Ramsden in *Man and Superman*, one of the Bourbons of individualism who learnt nothing and forgot nothing?

Yet Dicey's work exerted an influence out of all proportion to its author's merits. All books, of course, have a life of their own in one sense, but law-books outlive their creators in a particularly curious way. For their continued standing depends upon their being at once recognized classics and in all practical respects entirely up to date. They become like those much-altered houses in which the original structure still clearly dominates the piecemeal additions. This process began for *The Law of the Constitution* when Dicey produced eight editions in his own lifetime; the last of these was then reprinted seven times before, in 1939, E. C. S. Wade brought out a fresh edition, which in turn was reprinted six times; then in 1959 Wade issued another edition in which his own introduction, outlining the ways in which Dicey's account needed to be brought up to date, now ran to over 190 pages, and this edition went through several reprintings, and so on. Moreover, Dicey's framework, which survived all these modifications of detail, exerted an influence upon a wider audience than merely that provided by budding lawyers, and this brings us back to the main historical interest of his work.

Historians of political theory have generally told the story of the development of political thought in England from the mid-nineteenth century in terms either of the high-level abstractions of a transition from Utilitarianism to Idealism, or else, with more obvious purchase, of the replacement of Liberalism by Socialism; in such stories the leading characters are, inevitably, Mill, Green, Bosanquet, Hobhouse, and the Fabians. But, shifting the focus, a strong case could be made for saying that in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries the leading Englishman's reflections on his polity — and indeed, upon the appropriate ways to think about politics at all — were bound up at least as much with law and history as with what is now regarded as political theory. In telling the story in these terms, the *dramatis personae* might include such figures as Stubbs, Freeman, Seeley, Maitland — and, of course, Dicey himself.

This understanding of politics nourished, as it in turn fed upon, the perceived centrality of constitutional issues both at home and abroad, an understanding which was, in the fashion for the "historic method" (by no means one method and not always particularly historical), projected backwards in the relatively modern discipline of constitutional history. In more narrowly academic terms, this concentration offered a prospect, at a time when the study of politics was first being seriously established at the universities, of a subject which was both teachable (which, as always, partly meant examinable), and, arguably, useful. For, given that such study was primarily seen as a preparation for the service of the state in the most general sense, and given that the professional classes were on the whole satisfied with the form of polity in which they lived, there was an understandable pressure to conceive the relevant dimension of the study of politics in formal-legal terms. When, in addition, one takes account of the inevitable "educational lag", the institutional inertia and career patterns which ensure that syllabuses reflect the preoccupations of a generation or more ago, one starts to see how it was that so many students at English and English-formed universities in the first half of the century cut their teeth on Dicey. It is a way of thinking about politics which, since taken some hard knocks as, of course, has the complexity about the English polity which was one of its conditions. But in retrospect, one of the most striking facts about both, as about Dicey and his books which helped to sustain them, was just their sheer stubborn longevity.

*Time, Work and Culture in the Middle Ages*, by Jacques Le Goff (translated by Arthur Goldhammer, 333pp. The University of Chicago Press, £13.50, 0 226 47060 0), is the first English translation of a work which was originally published in Paris in 1977 (and, in English, by the Anchor School, and in the work of Man and Levi Strauss, the eight-

## On the legal side

By Gordon Leff

BRIAN TIERNEY and PETER LINEHAN  
(Editors)  
*Authority and Power: Studies on Medieval Law and Government* presented to Walter Ullmann on his seventieth birthday  
274pp. Cambridge University Press. £25.  
0 521 22275 3

This volume of essays to Walter Ullmann marks his seventieth birthday and his recent retirement from the chair of Medieval History at Cambridge. As the editors say, Professor Ullmann's association with Cambridge is especially appropriate. No one has done more during his thirty years there to foster the specifically Cambridge tradition of medieval legal history of which Maitland was the outstanding representative; and in extending it to the study of the medieval canonists and civilians, Ullmann has fulfilled Maitland's own behests. Ullmann has been largely responsible for a new genre of legal and institutional history approached through the study of law, above all canon law and in relation to the authority and government of the church; indeed he has been almost too successful in having subordinated the study of medieval political thought to that of law; and it is only recently that there have been signs of revived interest in other non-legal forms of political theory. His work has been characterized by a combination of close textual study and a clearly-defined view of the role and evolution of law in both the medieval church and secular society, to be seen in the bibliography of his writings which occupies twenty pages of the present volume.

It includes histories of the papacy, law and medieval political thought as well as a succession of articles and reviews on most aspects of government and law; and it ranges from the early papacy and Carolingian kingship to the Great Schism, humanism and the early sixteenth century. He has not been an uncontroversial figure and despite his command and erudition many of his interpretations do not command universal assent, even among his former pupils. If Ullmann has a weakness it is a certain conceptual inflexibility, a tendency to make issues too clear-cut, as in his often criticized division of medieval concepts of authority into either descending or ascending theories; which is rather like dividing all medieval philosophers into nominalists and realists — even when they are one or the

A number of these essays consist of restatements and developments of the original work on which they are based; that can be particularly useful where, as in the case of Drs Nelson and Canning, it has not been previously published in a complete form. Others are new studies. Their very diversity is testimony to Ullmann's versatility and openness to different kinds of history, greater testimony than if they all bore the stamp of the master. For although he has inaugurated a new academic field of study, in which Gilchrist, Duggan, Watt, Tierney and Wilks — one of the initiators of the present enterprise but unfortunately not represented in it — are the most notable practitioners, it has not become a school in any narrow sense of adhering to a common doctrine. These scholars, like the others here, have gone their individual ways which, in the cases of Tierney, Black and McGrade, have led among other things to interesting developments in political theory. The effect has been neutral in creating a new constellation of studies, each with its own orbit.

That by any reckoning is a formidable achievement, which this volume celebrates. It is a pity that it had to cost so much and does not have an index.

## Irish informative

By Roy Foster

D. J. HICKEY and J. E. DOHERTY  
*A Dictionary of Irish History Since 1800*  
615pp. Gill and Macmillan. £20.  
0 359 20160 X

A review can do little more than recognize the existence of this ambitious volume; to catalogue omissions or criticize emphases, if inevitable, rapidly becomes invidious. The authors' decision to limit the field to events, persons and issues "since 1800" leads to some lacunae (no Wolfe Tone, though we are given the 1963 "Wolfe Tone Society"); no Speaker-Foster or Sir John Parnell, though Sir John Barrington mops irrepressibly up. Another grey area for those Englishmen with Irish connections: Morley and Newman are given their due, and the satiric fourteenth Earl of Derby appears in unfamiliar guise as a secular educationist. Yet Gerald Balfour, considered by Tim Healy one of the finest chief secretaries, receives a scant ten lines, and H. E. Duke, another of Healy's nominees, no mention at all. Bright spots in Loughborough and Bradlaugh do not. Some Lords Lieutenant are overlooked; Abercorn had less to do with

than essays in the book focus on the "collective behaviour of medieval people coping with their material environment". Of the French edition's reviewer in the TLS wrote, "Le Goff never overworks his insights from the social sciences". He not only finds the right questions but the courage to ask them."

advances in Irish education than the seventh Duke of Marlborough (who appears here as the eighth) or Hicks Beach (who is, incorrectly, hyphenated). Nor does Irish America get its full due (*The Irish World*, but no *Boston Pilot*; and no Finlay Dunne).

On home ground there is more to ponder, though the careful avoidance of value-judgments results in inadequate entries for Jack Yeats and Flann O'Brien (who appears under "Intention to lit" despite the authors' intention to lit entrants "under the name by which they were generally known"). Similarly, George Moore is awarded the same amount of space as his father and brother, whose importance was surely of a lesser order. The absence of source-lists at the end of entries is regrettable, as is the lack of guidance to further material (the extensive and location of Anna Parnell's manuscript account of the Land War, for instance, is usefully mentioned in her entry, but not that of Alfred Webb). It is published autobiography in his case, the less a welcome and usually accurate compendium. Comprehensive entries like those under "Local Government" and "Land Acts" convey a great deal of useful information in one place, and it is especially handy for more abstruse or local concepts (matchmaker, gomme, ball-woman and tubary-right all have excellent entries). If it is sometimes rather lazier in approach, this is no doubt partly proper (the Second World War appears throughout in its correct Irish terminology as "The Emergency"). One hopes that volumes covering the earlier period are in preparation; a great many of the subjects and issues treated here have a pedigree that goes back, for better or worse, far beyond the Union.

OBITUARIES FROM THE TIMES 1951-1960  
896pp. Newspaper Archive Developments Ltd.  
£22.50.  
0 903713 9 9

This third volume in the now firmly established *Times* series takes us well back beyond the 1961-70 and 1971-75 compilations issued so far. The longer perspective gives the impression that the worthies recorded for the 1950s are very much older than their successors, although the average age of the Bs in the period turns out to be 73.8 against the 74.6 of those who died in 1971-75. Nevertheless this average means that most of those dying in 1955 were born in the early 1880s, so the volume covers many who would have been centenarians had they lived. There are of course those who died young — Mike Hawthorn at 29, Kay Kendall at 32, Evn Perot at about 30, Tyrone Power at only 44 and Senator McCarthy at only 48 — but these are offset by the very long-lived, such as Scott Lidgett, the Methodist leader, at 98, Santayana at 88, Horace Annesley Vachell at 93, H. de Vere Stacpoole at 88, or Miss Clough, the Principal of Newnham, who survived until the age of 98 in 1960.

Sometimes the continued existence of these venerables is surprising, like the whistler Sir Nidam Comper's still being alive at 96 in 1960, but it is only rarely that their later years provide any important additions to their notices. The notice for Sir Archibald Bodkin must have waited unchanged during the twenty-eight years of his retirement from the Directorship of Public Prosecutions, and Vesta Tilly's had to be adjusted with a "not many living players can have seen her" at the time of her death, aged 88, in 1952. Only with Marshal Pétain, who died in 1951, aged 95, is the picture radically revised following the events of the last twelve years of his life, he being "remembered as a defender of Verdun but as the Marshal of Vichy".

The older notices take us back into a period in which there was a specially secretive, rather furtive quality about the management of *The Times*'s obituary department. It is not mentioned in the paper's official history, and one can only pick up a few scraps of information about the editorship before the present incumbent took over in 1956. It used to be under the management of Mrs Belloc Lowndes's husband, who while his wife was staffing cream buns at Goulet's worked for nearly fifty years on *The Times* staff, retiring in 1938. F. S. A. Lowndes was a skilled advisor and corrector, especially of Anglo-Indian notices; one of his regular contributors wrote to his widow that "sometimes the work was done under great pressure when nerves might be frayed. But never was there an angry or hurtful word from him". Equanimity and an immense range of knowledge and contacts are clearly essential for the job, and the present editor continues the tradition.

The older style shows through in many more of the vapid tributary phrases than seem to be admitted nowadays, and perhaps also in the not infrequent declarations of under-performance that I do not remember in other volumes. Of Bishop Woodward of Gloucester we are told that "he will not rank among the prelates of his time either as a great scholar or as a leader in public thought, he will be held in affectionate remembrance by his clergy". "Though he was not a poet of original force," R. C. Trevelyan's notice, mololetly begins. Major-General Sir Ernest Sullivan "reached the age of high life in the army as his talents and imagination seemed to forecast". Such diminishing introductions scarcely encourage the reader to pursue the record of modest achievement. They are however very different from the more effective, and well-considered, understatement that is an essential part of the obituary style, such as the remark that "B. W. Chapman of the Oxford University Press" never allowed himself to be a martyr "to conversion in social intercourse".

Very rarely was clearly becoming a rarity even in the 1950s, and subjects are frequently spoken of as being "at the end of their lives". The solar spectroscopist, Edward "Babe" Fine, "example of the practical scientist who unfortunately increasingly rare in our days, who could design, construct and test with his own hands delicate apparatus for probing nature's secrets".

## Departed with distinction

By Alan Bell

"It will be long before another with the manifold, multifarious gifts of Webb-Johnson fills the horizon of the world of surgery" is similar in tone; and of Sir Frederic Kenyon, one of that notably long-lived race of men, the Directors of the British Museum, we are told that "It is doubtful whether the museum more ever had, or ever will have, a director more variously distinguished, or with so striking a combination of qualities". There is something bleak for the future in that afterthought, "or ever will have". Perhaps it is increasing specialization in all walks of life rather than a more optimistic outlook that makes such gloomy predictions less common in the more recent years covered by *The Times* collections.

One notes in this volume more of a tendency than is currently fashionable to take refuge for explanations of character in supposed national qualities. Several subjects have their Scottishness stressed — Sir Eric MacLagan (of the Victoria and Albert Museum) "being a Scotsman by birth could relate a good tale with zest and humour" — and Toscanini's obituary is punctuated by allusions to comparative national psychology. "The Latin mind," we are told, "like the Mediterranean sea which conditions it, views things with hard edges, clear outlines, and thorough-going logic". This kind of Chianti-soaked flanneling is now fortunately extinct.



The musical entries in general, like those for art and literature, are very variable in quality. Both performers and composers are on the whole rather sourly treated. Dennis Brain's brief notice, after his fatal motor accident, pays due tribute to his technical facility, but adds that "He professed to have no nerves; though his playing lacked nothing in musical sensibility, but insensitiveness to risk seems to have exacted a heavy price". Constant Lamberton's notice concludes that "multiplicity of gifts was perhaps an embarrassment of riches for his career". Prokofiev "could be dry, and the percussive character of his piano concerto makes them as succulent as dog biscuit". Such phrases emanate from the world of MacLaglan and Gossage. A characteristic notice of Vaughan Williams is very much preferable; there is a good account of Ernest Newman that is excellent on the changes in critical approach during his ninety years' life.

British artists commemorated in the volume are a mixed batch. Anthony Devas is well done (though he exhibited at the

Royal Academy he could hardly be called academic, and on the other hand he did not, like Sargent, get that reputation for ruthlessness which, like the diatribes of a fashionable preacher, attracts those who profess to be shocked"); he is better conveyed than some other hands, such as his alphabetical near neighbour Thomas Derick, "an artist of distinction and note... a scholarly and versatile decorative artist of the old school". One wonders whether Philip Connard's industrious and devoted career, which carried him to the Keeper'ship of the Royal Academy, had really "won for himself a very real and sound position in the recent annals of British art" as permanent as his obituary certificate on his death in 1958 at the age of 83. Some of the artistic careers mentioned here are comparable to that of "General Pangalos, whose short-lived dictatorship in Greece in 1926-27 is hardly new [1952] even a memory", an opening very much in the old *Times* "Small Earthquake in Chile: Few Hurt" tradition. For minor artists like the (now highly fashionable) Charles Spenceley (the modern Meissonier of British domestic life), a list of titles of his "profusely detailed domestic interiors" — "The New Codell", "The Empty Chair" — is as evocative as the naming of the compositions of Albert W. Kestelbey, such as his "In a Monastery Garden", "In a Persian Market", etc.

At the other end of the international political spectrum, Senator McCarthy gets short shrift, with the severe conclusion that "His career indicates the great, if transient, influence which can be obtained in the life of a democratic country by the loud and persistent repudiation of the big lie". The foreign element in these volumes is an important constituent, whether providing what are virtually essays in international history, or giving a specifically British imperial view of some careers (such as the Aga Khan's), or merely by adding diverting figures bred in other traditions — like the Duke of Alba's memorable notice: "Lean and lined, frail in looks but abounding in energy, alert of mind and capable of wit, he was always and above all the aristocrat — not by mere accident of illustrious birth, like some of his rank in Spain, but positively, actively, ineluctably: the cultivated prototype of dynastic pride, dignity, and intelligence." That is a type we shall not look upon again.

The obituaries of many of the more prominent Britons in the 1951-60 volume may now be compared with the equivalent volume of the supplement to the *Dictionary of National Biography* covering the same period, with its 760 entries as against the 1,450 from various nationalities in the *Times Obituaries*. These different proportions make it desirable to have both volumes available, for the additional biographies as well as for checking information about common subjects. The *DNB*, which was published somewhat belatedly in 1971, has all the advantages of mature deliberation over the *Times* notices, reprinted as they came hot from the press (or warmed up from stock) immediately after the deaths concerned. It is able to use later biographical studies, such as professional notices from the excellent British Academy series, or monographs of varying quality, to revise subjectively the often tentative newspaper opinions: thus Roxburgh's obituary found it impossible to assess the achievement of Stone School at the time of his death, but the *DNB* author was able to use Noel Annan's biography published in 1963.

The better shaping of the *DNB* notices allows for a more economical display of detail, and the reduction in the news element surrounding recent deaths gives a more appropriately historical framework: the Bevan in *The Times* is too much preoccupied with health service debates and with then current affairs, but the (unexpectedly short) notice in the *DNB* is third the length of Bevan, who gets roughly the same as Bevan in *The Times* is more rounded, with several biographical studies in a list of sources that, as so often, includes the *Times* obituary as an authority. And the editorial meticulousness of the *DNB* gives it a demonstrable advantage, whether in exact details of paragraphing or in dates and places of birth, or in other factual information: C. E. M. Joad gets a "He, 1905" instead of "1905".

value", no doubt a correct judgment but to be less unkindly said on such an occasion. There is an acid drop for James Branch Cabell, a sour Roy Campbell, a thin Norman Douglas, a Rose Macaulay that is more evocative of her personality than of her literary career, a flautist Thomas Mann, and a repetitious Dorothy L. Sayers. Against these, the Albert Camus is excellent, presenting a balanced critical account very soon after the accident which killed him; there is a long and much longer ones in *Times Obituaries* devoted to a magnificent piece in the old tradition, beautifully done and requiring several readings to catch the full flavour of the Thunderer devoting itself to great matters of Church and State. It is my favourite in this volume, probably in all three. The Quickwood notice is by no means uncritical. We read of Lord Hugh that "The flavour of his oratory remained thenceforward as incontestable as its limitation. He could fascinate, interest, amuse, delight, inspire; yet he could not persuade." And high-flown though its peroration undoubtedly is, it is by no means entirely fanciful:

As with the later periods covered in the recent volumes, there is the usual wide-ranging international coverage, 1951-60 being particularly strong in Russian notices. Beria, Stalin and Vishinsky all being fully covered, among others. The last is not spared — "the most eloquent but also the most vicious public prosecutor in Bolshevik history" — and Stalin is given a massive spread (13 columns, in a volume where George VI gets 18 columns and Queen Mary 9). Stalin, at Djugashvili, had to be treated somewhat provisionally when so few details of his terrible reign were known at the time of his death; his obituary remarks that he "appeared to lack a certain element of humanity which Lenin generally maintained in personal relations", and history was to confirm the appearances.

The notice deals well with the Revised Prayer Book controversy ("to persuade a composite legislature that the introduction of common forms is in keeping with the genius of common prayer was doubtless no light undertaking"), but is far from solemn about a career which once embraced a period when this theologically minded nobleman developed an unexpected taste for society and took to the hunting field: "His riding, unhindered by experience, was considered intrepid, and showed the presence in his nature of traits which subsequently during the 1914 War brought him a commission in the Royal Air Force."

Inevitably in a work of this vast length it is the characters and the oddities that stand out so well, curiosities of nomenclature or career leaving a sometimes unreluctantly staid record. Jeanne Bourgeois, Alfred Arnold Coccoza, Avrom Hirsch Goldbogen, and George Edward Wade are revealed as the original names of Mistinguett, Marie Lanza, Mike Todd and George Robey, but we are not told the given names of either Bernard Berenson or Sir Lewis Namjer (both of whose notices lack an adequate discussion of their technical methods), and sometimes other basic information about names and dates is made less clear than now seems to be the current practice.

Father Ignatius Rice of Donal's skill as a county cricketer meant that "for some years he was the only monk admitted to the pages of Wisden". Edmund Dulac was skilled not only as a book illustrator but as a maker of "bamboo flutes of the eastern type to be played by breathing from the nose"; and Ernest Jones, the psychoanalyst, turns out to have been an expert figure-skater, who wrote a text-book on the subject. Such side-lights have a special place in a compilation of this kind, alongside the large-scale contributions to national and international history, and the unmemorable commemoration of eminence.

We are told of Atty Persse, the prominent ragshop owner and trainer, that after a hard day with the hounds, "When boots were drawn off on winter evenings, his company was much sought, for from his enormous experience he would produce an endless stream of chuckling stories that could keep one up gladly until the early hours of the morning". Lacking the company of an aged Irish equestrian raconteur, this volume of *Times Obituaries* may be recommended as an alternative source of miscellaneous and entertaining fact and anecdote, not necessarily in boots and spurs, but certainly beguiling the browser far into the small hours. Its contents encapsulate a special tradition of *The Times*, which, happily, continues as an important part of its role as a journal of record (as readers of last year's splendid notice of Canon de Zulueta will recall), and one hopes that the obituary columns will flourish under the paper's new direction.

John G. Jones



## Anthony Thwaite



## Observing the oracle

By Bernard Bergonzi

J. R. HAMMOND:  
H. G. Wells  
Interviews and Recollections  
121pp. Macmillan. £12.  
0 333 27416 4

H. G. Wells may not be as widely read as he once was, but he has certainly not been forgotten, or reduced to the status of a once-important writer of some historical interest. He has become an object of academic study, but also has a reputation as a Founding Father of modern science fiction. His major fiction remains in print in cheap editions, is evidently popular with general readers, and is regularly adapted for films and television. Few twentieth-century writers have such a broad appeal. J. R. Hammond's collection of interviews and recollections looks at the man rather than the work. It is full of human interest, though the book is basically a scissors-and-paste job that adds footnotes or synopses to Wells's *Experiment in Autobiography* and the existing biographies by Vincent Brown, Lovat Dickson, and Norman and Jeanne Mackenzie. It is, however, convenient to have so much scattered material brought together. It covers the whole of Wells's long and active life, from a lengthy interview published in 1897, when he was thirty-one and already celebrated as the author of *The Time Machine*, *The Island of Dr. Moreau* and several other books, to a sardonic piece of self-description called "A Complete Exposé of this Notorious Literary Humbug" that Wells published in 1945, a year before he died. Famous people who knew Wells and wrote about him are drawn upon, such as Compton Mackenzie, Margaret Cole, Frank Swinnerton, Penner Brockway, Julian Huxley, Kingsley Martin, Frederic Warburg, and Francis Williams. But one of the best-written and most engaging pieces is not by a professional writer; it contains recollections of Wells's family by Mathilde Mayer, who, as a young Swiss girl, was engaged in 1908 to act as governess to Wells's sons.

A fairly consistent impression of Wells the man emerges from these articles. He was warm-hearted, marvellous, energetic, argumentative, quick-witted, impatient, somewhat paranoid, and attractive as a personality if not particularly so in appearance. He lacked the self-conscious vanity of

the distinguished man of letters, though he was touchy about criticism and drove hard bargains with publishers. Frank Swinnerton provides an admiring account of Wells's rapidity of response: "He assimilates with lightning speed. If you watch a man giving him some information, you will see his head nod sharply; then again sharply; and a third time with determination. He has wanted to know something; he knows it. That something, over which an informant is ready to labour for an hour, is communicated in three minutes; and I suspect that five further minutes would be a martyrdom to the listener." This quality would be very desirable in a hard-pressed senior executive, but in a serious writer and thinker it was double-edged.

As other contributors suggest, Wells reacted a little too quickly to everything, and often made himself look foolish because of the instant, unreflective responses which were preserved in the permanence of print. Bertrand Russell, in a generally cool account of Wells, whom he had known since 1902, describes his rash reactions on the outbreak of the First World War: "In the very first days, he stated that the whole Prussian military machine was paralysed before the defences of Liège - which fell a day or two later." Wells was clearly a fascinating talker, but his inability to keep his mouth shut, whether in words or in print, made him very vulnerable.

There are some nice anecdotes in this book, particularly about Odette Kest, Wells's temperamental mistress in the 1920s and early 1930s, who could also not keep her mouth shut and delighted in saying outrageous things to famous but dull visitors to the house where she and Wells lived in the South of France. It was called "Lou Pidou", a contraction in local dialect of "Le Petit Dieu", one of Odette's nicknames for Wells. They carved the words "Two Lovers Built This House" on the mantelpiece, which proved an embarrassment when they split up and Odette turned spiteful. The gossip is entertaining, but the book doesn't perceptibly add to our understanding of Wells's writing considered as literature. It might, though, provide source material for an interesting enquiry in the sociology of literature, looking at Wells as a case study of the Great Writer, a characteristic product of the early twentieth century and the apogee of artist culture and general literacy, who seemed to write and evade opinions as easily and regularly as breathing, and who achieved global stature as a public oracle.

## Freedom from fact

F. S. L. Lyons

MARY HELEN THURTELL:  
W. B. Yeats and Irish Folklore  
286pp. Dublin: Gill and Macmillan. £13.  
0 7171 1020 6

Although references to Yeats's obsessive use of Irish folklore, legend and mythology abound in the critical literature about him, Mary Thurell is justified in saying that there has been no detailed study of this aspect of his early work and little systematic attempt to distinguish the different elements which folklore, legend and mythology correspond.

These gaps she has set herself to fill and in doing so has made a valuable and original contribution to Yeats studies. It is not the latest of books to read and she is given occasionally to statements of the obvious; however when she gets into her stride she is extremely perceptive.

She begins by relating Yeats to the nineteenth-century Irish tradition and then describes comprehensively his involvement with folklore and the extraordinarily wide, if never too well-organized, research that went into his early ethnologies of fairy and folk tales. Next follows a chapter on two early books, *Representative Irish Tales* and *The Celtic Twilight*, in which she demonstrates how Yeats drew on his knowledge of fairy lore to peacock stories. In this section of her study she is particularly successful in defending this poet from the familiar charge that his early, money may be confined to idealize the decidedly unideal. Later in the 1890s his interest in "personality" and how to express it grew steadily and, although his intention to produce a book on the nineteenth-century Irish tales and im-

paries never materialized, Mrs Thurell suggests that this increasing preoccupation with real people (however legendary the deeds attributed to them) might be part of the general movement of his thought. But the real fascination of Yeats in the 1890s was the aspect which he seemed to be hurrying to a variety of directions. To reconcile these apparent divergences and inconsistencies is a major work of synthesis which no single specialist has yet succeeded in achieving. Such a synthesis, admittedly, lies outside Mrs Thurell's terms of reference, but in her chapter on *The Secret Rose* she does indicate one possible line of approach where she uses that book to demonstrate how folklore and the old heroic myths were beginning to come together in his work. On the other hand, while she is clearly aware of the relevance to his exploration of the myths of his simultaneous forays into the occult, the connection is not so firmly made as it might have been.

But it is perhaps too demanding to ask for that when we have already been given so much. Essentially what she has to tell us is that for Yeats folklore in all its guises provided an indispensable traditional basis for his art and that this folklore, precisely because it was oral, and precisely because it is a contemporary literature, affected not only his subject matter, but his meditations about his writing, and ultimately the writing itself. This is not perhaps a very novel conclusion but it has not previously been so well documented and argued.

As for Yeats himself, he remains a somewhat enigmatic figure. But at least we get from this sympathetic study a genuine sense of his impetuousness if not ill-directed energy. There is something very appealing in the portrait of the artist as a young man striving, with still inadequate tools, to harness his thoughts into unity.



Two visions of a poet. The photograph (1895) by Paul Nadar and the lithograph (1896) by Edvard Munch of Stéphane Mallarmé among the illustrations which accompany Richard R. Brettell's article "Nadar and a Photograph of Stéphane Mallarmé" in *New York Times* Number 14 of The Library Chronicle of the University of Texas at Austin (issued quarterly at a subscription rate of \$20). Paul Nadar was the son of Gaspard Félix Tournachon who under the pseudonym of "Nadar" became the most famous photographer of nineteenth-century France. Nadar here had made an earlier portrait of Mallarmé, more dramatic in its pose and lighting. Brettell in his article notes the proportional structure of the son's photograph in which the head is in the brightest light, where the background is the darkest. He sees in Munch's portrait of Paul Nadar's photograph, and of the symbolist art of Odilon Redon. Other articles in the same issue of Chronicle include "Sir William James Herschel and the Birth of Fingerprint Identification" by Eileen Shorland and "The Enemy in His Books - A Wyndham Lewis Collection" by C.J. Fox.

## The provincial thruster

By John Batchelor

JAMES HEPBURN (Editor):  
Arnold Bennett  
The Critical Heritage  
554pp. Routledge and Kegan Paul. £18.50  
0 7100 0512 1

Pound's "Mr. Nixon", Wyndham Lewis's "Samuel Shoenberg", Bennett was one of the most powerful figures in literary London in the 1920s, and in some quarters he was the most hated. This well-balanced collection scrupulously represents his enemies as well as his admirers.

Virginia Woolf's famous essay, "Mr. Bennett and Mrs. Brown", is quoted in full, and so is a less familiar piece by Cyril Connolly. Virginia Woolf hated Bennett's work and claimed that he was an impostor, incapable of presenting personality; she was wrong about this and unfair to Bennett, some of whose portraits of women - notably those of Constance and Sophia Bates in *The Old Wives' Tale* - are as good as those in Woolf's own work. Cyril Connolly's attack is more difficult to answer. He condemns Bennett as a gifted man who abused his talents with criminal irresponsibility, and this is, indeed, the problem: when he was good he was very, very good, and when he was bad he was unappealing. No other major novelist has allowed himself to publish work as bad as *The Teresa of Waiting Street* and *Secret and Profane Love*. In his early days he needed the money, but his later trashy books do not have this excuse and were written, as Connolly says, to "give full rein to his own preoccupation with male vanity and material success".

There has been good critical discussion of Bennett recently, notably from John Lucas and Samuel Hynes, but the interest of this "Critical Heritage" book is that it enables one to see how perceptive some of his contemporaries were about him. In the early years, even the good ones, some of the minor characters are rather heavily sketched in; this is presumably what Connolly is referring to when he says of *A Man from the North* that "the dip had been struck hard enough", and what Wells meant when he said that *Anna of the Five Towns* was "a photograph a little underdeveloped". The great novels, *The Old Wives' Tale* and *Clayhanger*, attracted appropriately long and thoughtful reviews from well-known figures, notably Edward Garnett who recognized *The Old Wives' Tale* as a major work of "realism", a "richly personal book which celebrates the spirit of environment" and is "particularly successful in relating the private to the

public, "the family life upstairs to the shop life below and the town life outside".

The real discovery of this volume is Dixon Scott, a young *Manchester Guardian* reviewer who was to die at Gallipoli and was about twenty when he wrote this: "The rum law that makes our Russians and Swinburnes - supreme lovers and masters of richly orchestrated words - practically post-dead to every other kind of music, seems to have a corollary which provides that men like Mr Shaw and Mr Bennett shall possess the musician's bump of mathematics." Bennett handles words "like chessmen, never like keys - arranging them in rational rows, stripped brightly bare." His principles are "architectural" as well as musical, "explicit, male, classical, never feminine or fugitive".

It is certainly true that a sense of musical and architectural structure underpins Bennett's best work: *The Old Wives' Tale* is almost in sonata form, its four books standing to each other as exposition, development, recapitulation and coda. And there is something "stripped brightly bare" about Bennett's diction, although the suggestion that he avoids metaphor is wrong: *Anna of the Five Towns* is rich in metaphor, and the scene in Tellwright's kitchen in Chapter Three will not make its point unless one sees how the metaphors are working.

Dixon Scott refers briefly to another feature of Bennett's best work; the irony gained from the provincial viewpoint. In his Five Towns novels he writes both as the Edwardian man of letters with metropolitan assumptions and as the local boy who is a native of the place. Class distinction as understood in London is both exposed and parodied in *Bursley*. In *The Old Wives' Tale* the Bursley Wakes are "not a spectacle for the leading families" what can "leading families" mean in such a place? Mrs Bates condescends to Miss Clayhanger, the pinched spinster, schoolmistress with the southern accent whose "O's had a gentled leaning towards 'ow' as if ritualism leans towards Romanism". But Miss Clayhanger has a merciless eye for Mrs Bates's heedless vulgarity, betrayed by her note on "lavender coloured paper with scalloped edges, the cheapest mode of the day". In this duel for social supremacy Bennett presents a conflict simultaneously absurd - Miss Clayhanger is too pathetic to be a real threat to anybody - and central: the aggression and anxiety of every provincial who, like Bennett, has struggled out of his background and tried to rid himself of a regional accent.

Bennett himself was more accurate about his writing than were his reviewers; he knew his "artistic work" from his pocket, *Of the Old Wives' Tale* he wrote on publication day: "The book is, too good, they can't possibly understand it."

And indeed, although it had very favorable reviews, the book sold more slowly than any of his other work until it came on in America.

Given his professionalism and self-knowledge, why the Bennett problem? T.M. Young, reviewing *Clayhanger* in 1980 wrote: "It would be hard to find a parallel case to Mr. Bennett's, to match the gap that yawns between his best and his worst." He hits on part of the reason for the existence of this gap when he compares Bennett with Wells. Bennett has "little or nothing of Wells's passionate feeling for beauty, none of his ardent vitality, none of his hot insensitivity". Surely this is right. However aliphoidal Wells's writing becomes, his mind is always kept at some degree of tension by the light or crude in which he is engaged. Bennett has no such outside control, and without his art he is lost.

Bennett was a kind man, generous to young novelists, loyal to his friends; Frank Swinnerton's obituary essay testifies to the affection that he could inspire. Yet there is something important about his kindness. Wells believed that Bennett's stammer was caused by sexual inhibition, and certainly in all of Bennett there is a sense of sexual and emotional impasse which is accompanied by a view of man which is finally pessimistic. While Wells's lower-middle-class heroes have cheek and energy, push upwards through the social fabric and display its filminess, the possibility of personal freedom is excluded from Bennett's serious novels. (Though not, of course, from farces like *The Card*.) Edwin Clayhanger is trapped in Staffordshire by his father's dominant personality until it is too late for his dream of becoming an architect in London to be realized; the adventurous Sophia Bates comes back in exhausted old age to die with her timid sister Constance in Bursley at the end of this "Critical Heritage" book. In such a world, where the dream of becoming an architect in London to be realized; the adventurous Sophia Bates comes back in exhausted old age to die with her timid sister Constance in Bursley at the end of this "Critical Heritage" book. In such a world, where the dream of becoming an architect in London to be realized; the adventurous Sophia Bates comes back in exhausted old age to die with her timid sister Constance in Bursley at the end of this "Critical Heritage" book.

Time was the victor in these novels and time defeated Bennett the man. The photographs taken when he was still show the young thruster of the 1890s transformed into a bloated phallus with protruding teeth and heavy concave rings under the exhausted eyes. Stammering and taciturn, Bennett looked sadly at these photographs and finally said: "I don't care what they say, I am a man."

## Sanctuaries of privacy

By Peter Conrad

ELLEN EVE FRANK:  
Literary Architecture  
Essays toward a tradition  
311pp., 37 black-and-white illustrations.  
University of California Press. £10.75.  
0 520 0352 3

Ellen Eve Frank's book abounds in bright ideas which haven't quite made the difficult trek from percepts to concepts. Her subject is the literary use of architectural allusion in the work of Pater, Hopkins, Proust and James, though—more ambitiously than this limited repertoire of writers allows for—it expands into a meditation on the sense of space in literature. About space Miss Frank is herself, since she and her book originate in Berkeley, slightly spaced-out: her essay begins with an italicized transcription of one of her dreams, and she fusily treats her own book as a product of dream architecture. Its photographic illustrations tinged with the sepia shade of reverie, its own spatial integrity too self-consciously defended with insistence that "my Literary Architecture" ... cannot claim to be a traditional book, whether in its field, its subject, or its research. It attempts to take note of something which does not constitute an academic field but which, as its very subject is space—both ground and territory—does constitute a field of another sort, the field of literary and perceptual activity. Despite this breathy aestheticism, her writing is occasionally gruesome: "While cathedralizing Harry in 'slowness' to God, Hopkins desecrates a God destructive." And, perhaps in homage to the Gothic architects with their mania for what Pansky called scholastic membrification, she readily demonstrates words: "Poulet's and Macksey's concept of unity ... violates the distance [that is, the space, hence time, of the novel]."

I am also dubious about her method, which seems too loosely and associatively analogical. The captions to her illustrations state parallels between literature and architecture which can't be proved and don't even want to be, since Frank is content to leave them in the interstitial ether between the forms, in the irresponsible realm of suggestiveness. Thus a tier of ornate steps from Wells's Cathedral is first admitted to be irrelevant "Architecture at its softest; it is not for this that Hopkins turns to architecture" but then attached to Hopkins after all, not with the aid of any argumentative language but with mere illogical assertion ("The sea of stairs, while structurally so different from Hopkins's preferred architectural forms, does suggest Hopkins's lines on vision").

Her decision to confine herself to the imprudent tradition "toward" which her four writers are alleged to be travelling, while snugly insulating the hook and allowing her to house herself in it in company with her dreams, weakens her speculative forays outside that small canon in the concluding chapter. At the outset she makes the something important about his kindness. Wells believed that Bennett's stammer was caused by sexual inhibition, and certainly in all of Bennett there is a sense of sexual and emotional impasse which is accompanied by a view of man which is finally pessimistic. While Wells's lower-middle-class heroes have cheek and energy, push upwards through the social fabric and display its filminess, the possibility of personal freedom is excluded from Bennett's serious novels. (Though not, of course, from farces like *The Card*.) Edwin Clayhanger is trapped in Staffordshire by his father's dominant personality until it is too late for his dream of becoming an architect in London to be realized; the adventurous Sophia Bates comes back in exhausted old age to die with her timid sister Constance in Bursley at the end of this "Critical Heritage" book. In such a world, where the dream of becoming an architect in London to be realized; the adventurous Sophia Bates comes back in exhausted old age to die with her timid sister Constance in Bursley at the end of this "Critical Heritage" book.

New houses leave the privacy within them denuded and vulnerable: even the front door has been fashionably supplied with a wrought-iron gateway lined with the female form, each of its cavities potentially harboring a secret; its sliding panels, like that later panel which exposes Oswald's guilt in *Daniel Deronda*—blackening disconcerting truths, *Northanger*

Abbey, less a parody of the Gothic novel than the subtlest and most alarming of them all (for a laundry list is a more intimate and incriminating document than the distraught confession Catherine expects to find), impugns Frank's claim that Jane Austen "does not show the fullest use or reach of the architectural analogue".

As for Dickens, Frank's banishment of him can't survive our recollection of Wemmick's fortification of his suburban villa as an armed installation. Dickens's crooked humped-backed houses and their malformed, para-architectural inhabitants like Silas Wegg, so wooden a man that his remaining organic leg seems to be turning to wood in sympathy with his surplussed appliance—show him to be an uncanny the paranoiac of architecture. In the mad metaphoric defensiveness of Wemmick, and of its prosthetic horror, in the case of Wegg's timber extremity.

Nevertheless, for all these caveats, Miss Frank's discussion of her four chosen authors is original and astute. The architecture she (and they) favour is circumscribed, cellular, anchoritic—the mind in Pater as a lonely room outside of which clamours the disintegrative flux of impression, demanding entry; Hopkins's walled and elated spiritual enclaves, paraded by his contented paragon Oxford which has only a "base and brickish skin" to seal it off from the invading exterior; Proust's domestication of self-consciousness, assigning memories to specific rooms; James's ideally empty fictional places, like the galleries or museums in which, on his return to New York in 1904, he sought mental refuge from compulsory publicity of the raucous streets, or his "shop of the mind" where the golden bowl is purchased, Frank, a hermit confined to an imaginary architecture of her own devising, misses instances where her self-contained tradition rays out in other directions, levelling the walls of her solipsistic dream-house. For instance, one of the interesting continuations of Pater's donnish cult of the room as a sanctuary, "the narrow chamber of the individual mind" sporing its oak, leads eventually to Virginia Woolf, for whom that mental chamber is abstract and fully peopled, a mere envelope within which Virginia Woolf's psychological lodgings are furnished with conceptual and invisible objects, like that table up a tree when you're not there which stands for Mr Ramsay's philosophy. They're not machines for living in, like Le Corbusier's technologically-serviced cubicles, but spaces sacred to thought—the "room of one's own" is the minimum prescription for personal freedom—and in their unresolvable confines the only communication permitted is the conversation Terence in *The Voyage Out* wants to transcribe, "the things people don't say". Virginia Woolf's mental spaces are elegiac. The room which was Jacob's now contains only the thought of him and a few relics of his dead body, among them the pale of his old shoes Mrs Flanders sadly handles. Like Pater's Notre Dame d'Aumône, it's a cathedral which has been miniaturized to the size of a coffin.

James's hushed and conventual interiors are also replicated, outside the limits of Ellen Eve Frank's study, in the upholstered shrines described by Edith Wharton in the book she wrote with Ogden Codman Jr on *The Decoration of Houses*. Because for Mrs Wharton the house is not only a brash extroverted member of society, but, more importantly, the casing for a neurotic privacy, she argues that house decoration must be considered a branch of architecture—"It is the house turned inside out, an 'interior architecture'." The American mistake, she says, is to mimic European styles as exemplified by public buildings and palaces, not to design for the covering recesses of "modern private life". Privacy is the requisite of civilization, and architecture must vigilantly protect that reclusion. Mrs Wharton is horrified by the French habit of putting sheets of plate-glass between rooms and replacing doorways by openings fifteen feet wide; she is especially solicitous about doors, the private life's armory, which American architects have slid into the wall or abolished altogether.

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*Maid* chooses a house wedding for Tina despite Episcopalian disapproval, arguing that "the greater privacy of a marriage in the house made up for its more secular character". Privacy, which is architecture's purpose to fortify, has become a spiritual value, and Mrs Ralston's drawing room is therefore made over into a chapel for the occasion. The Janesian cult of interior decoration, the neurotic habitations of Mrs Wharton's ghost stories. Her ghosts always adhere to architecture because the haunted house is an image for the unsettled, solitary mind, incarcerated with its anxieties. The house, recoiling from society, contracts into the perturbed consciousness. As *The Pomegranate Seed* begins, Charlotte Ashby hesitates on her own doorstep, pausing between "the grinding, rasping street life" of New York and "this velvet sanctuary she called home". The text of her fear is her reluctance to enter the house, which ought to be her mental shelter but is now polluted by her disquiet.

The revelation of Miss Frank's chapter on James is her reprinting of some of the photographs A.L. Coburn was commissioned to take for the frontispieces to the 1909 collected edition. She comments brilliantly on the architectonic massiveness of James's head, that "square chamber of attention", a cranial house, in Coburn's 1906 portrait of him, but otherwise leaves the photographs to speak for themselves. This is a shame, because the Platonic room into which all her writers think themselves, the occluded cave shuttered against the light but opening a single, grudging peep-hole onto the dazzling exterior, is in fact the camera, a box which comfortably imprisons you but supplies you with a pin-point as a point of vantage, a machine for mediated vision, conjuring images from light in dark rooms from which the day is scrupulously excluded. The fenestration in James's "house of fiction" is a battery of camera lenses, apertures drilled "in its vast front" from within, "by the need of the individual vision". James's frustration was that he felt himself to be outside the obscure, confidential camera, driven frantic by his desire to know what's happening inside it. Hence his identification of the creative imagination of a subject with spying prurience. In the preface to *The Spoils of Poynton* he describes himself peering through the discreet lattice of "barred sereaglio-windows" which "the outsider in the glare of the Eastern street", stranded outside the secretive box, he wants to squeeze back in to clamber through the keyhole, as in Beer-bohm's superb cartoon, into the camera's clandestine interior.

Coburn's photographs for the New York edition are extraordinary because they are, in the phrase Siegfried of his own cloud studies, "equivalents", corresponding not to the action but to the mental mood of the novels. Three years later, in a volume of photographs of New York, Coburn celebrated the mobility of the modern city and the camera's skill at matching its briskness and impatience; but the cities he photographed for James were utterly different—not energetic New York, its streets steaming with the lights of vehicles which won't be arrested by the camera but whose transit through time the camera can follow, or its buildings letting off plumes of steam like belated members of society, but a London muffled by fog or a Venice mouldering into the water; places as depopulated and spectrally abstract as James's own fictional rooms. The camera looks at architectural objects which are themselves cameras, jealously refusing to admit the light—the "shop of the mind"—with its reflecting windows which renders the interior inaccessible to the eye, or the closed and

on the novels, and a discussion by Terence Wright of the current state of Eliot criticism.

The fragment is the most interesting item. In it Eliot returns, after the modernity of *Daniel Deronda*, to historical ruralities, and the tart and complex characterization of the country setting makes one—of course—regret that it was carried no further.

The essay on *The Mill on the Floss*, by Graham Murfin, combines a trendy bow in the direction of an imperfectly understood structuralism with a *faux-naïf* approach to the position of the novel's narrator; Charles Palliser provides an excellent discussion of the way in which the historical

setting of *Adam Bede* is used to question the accuracy of the reader's perceptions of the past—and, by extension, the present. Juliet K. Gezari's defence of *Romola* enhances the novel's status and makes one feel the necessity of returning to it. The attempted defence of *Felix Holt* by Norman Vance is less happy. Jan B. Gordon's essay on *Middlemarch* is another exercise in imperfectly assimilated theory. George Levine's stretched comparison with *Northanger*, but Susan McKillop's closely analysing the workings of the finale in the light of Eliot's attitudes to feminism, is splendid, as is Bonnie Zimmerman's explication of Gwendolen Harleth in the context of contemporary fears for the character of modern woman.



"A naked Warrior attacking with a raised sword", drawn by Henry Fuseli in pencil and brown ink on the back of an envelope addressed to him some time between 1805 and 1810. This one of several Fuseli items to be auctioned by Christie's in their sale of English drawings and watercolours at 8 King St, London SW1 on March 24. Other artists represented include Constable, De Wint and Samuel Palmer, whose watercolour "Ighiteam Mole" is the only known instance of his recording the Captain Swing disturbances in his artistic output: Christie's estimate that it will fetch somewhere between £30,000 and £40,000.

unfathomable door which supplies the frontispiece to the first volume of *The Wings of the Dove*.

The disadvantage of Frank's restrictions of herself to four overlapping writers, working within a couple of generations and (except for Hopkins) only in the forms of fiction or the essay, is that her speculative range is cramped. Since the book's ambition is to define the aesthetics of space in literature, it ought perhaps to have included some study of the literary form in which space is the essential, contentious constituent—drama. The abiding subject of all drama is the territorial imperative, the human dispute for priority in a shared living space, our imperialistic extension of our *lebensraum*. The stage is the symbolic room over which we bicker, the terrain we plot to seize from one another. Hence the triumph of Hamlet's monologues, which commandeer that space by shrinking it to a nutshell which is to him an infinitude because he inhabits it alone; hence too his rivalry with Fortinbras, for whom that same stage-space is land to be colonized. Hamlet's bitter commentary on the soldier who will lose his life for a few acres of ground is pertinent to his own case because his ambitions are the same as those of Fortinbras, except that he conquers his terrain by meditative absolutism and introversion, not by military occupation.

Spatial antagonism is the preoccupation of drama from Hamlet leaping into Ophelia's grave to supplant Laertes to the triangular combat for rights to the attic in Pinter's *The Caretaker*. The conflicts of Pinter's characters are at mysterious in

their motivations: bickering over who will sleep in the draughty bed near the window, terrorizing one another with vacuum cleaners, they're engaged in the immemorial dramatic battle for control of the stage's *lebensraum*. Tragedy, in a play like Elmer Rice's *Street Scene*, is a consequence of congestion; his people in the tenement are psychologically overcrowded, maddened by their proximity to one another. The rooms of novels, like those which Miss Frank discusses, are the impenetrable sanctuaries of privacy, but drama presents architecture as construction. Only in Willy Loman's deranged fantasy can he walk through the walls of the house in *Death of a Salesman*. Otherwise the solidity of those walls, and the looming shapes of the other houses which abut and impinge on Willy's, stand for unalterable, unmanageable reality. In Elmer Rice's *The Subway*, architecture presses in on the characters and stifles them: the play's sets are a grim concrete cell, "solid from floor to ceiling with built-in steel filing-cabinets", a jammed subway car at rush-hour, or a cage-like bedroom, its wallpaper vertically striped like bars.

Perhaps the best way of complimenting Ellen Eve Frank's book is to disagree with it and to supplement it. As the subtitle admits, it's a venture in the direction of a tradition, and its ideas aren't arrivals but itineraries, not conclusive formulations but alluring possibilities, invitations to extrapolation. Of its very nature, such a project is bound to seem teasing and incomplete; yet it justifies itself by provoking thought in those who read it.

## Eliot exegetics

By Jean Wilson

ANNE SMITH (Editor):  
George Eliot  
Centenary Essays and an Unpublished Fragment  
221pp. Vision. £11.95.  
0 85478 254 0

This book consists of an unpublished fragment of the novel on which George Eliot was working when she died, edited by William Barker from a manuscript at the King's School, Canterbury; eight essays

on the novels, and a discussion by Terence Wright of the current state of Eliot criticism.

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## commentary

## Spoils of empire

By J.B. Donne

Asante Kingdom of Gold  
Museum of Mankind

His bracelets were the richest mixtures of beads and gold, and his fingers covered with rings; ... his ankle strings of gold ornaments of the most delicate workmanship, small drums, sankos (lutes), stools, swords, guns, and birds, clustered together; his sandals, of a soft white leather, were embossed across the instep band with small gold and silver cases of sapphires (chams); he was seated in a low chair, richly ornamented with gold; he wore a pair of gold castanets on his fingers and thumb, which he clapped to enforce silence. The belts of the guards behind his chair were casted in gold, and covered with small jaw bones of the same metal; the elephants' tails, waving a small cloud before him, were spangled with gold, and large plumes of feathers were flourished amid them. His eunuch presided over these attendants, wearing only one massy piece of gold about his neck: the royal stool, entirely cased in gold, was displayed under a splendid umbrella, with drums, sankos, horns, and various musical instruments, cased in gold, about the thickness of cartridge paper.

Thus T.E. Bowdich on his first encounter with the Asantehene, or King of Asante, Osei Bonsu, in his capital of Kumasi in 1817. This splendid report of Asante's profusion of gold is as famous in West African history as Howard Carter's account of the opening of the tomb of Tutankhamun — with the difference that it describes a living, not a dead, king.

The newly opened exhibition in the Museum of Mankind wonderfully recreates the atmosphere of the Asante Kingdom, now part of modern Ghana, during the nineteenth century. This was a period of increasing European infiltration, leading up to the Asanti Wars and the overthrow of the kingdom in 1896, about which Baden-Powell wrote with his accustomed jovial boorishness. Of the destruction of the royal mausoleum at Bonimbe he wrote: "we set the whole of the fetish village in flames, and a splendid blaze it made". Perhaps he saw himself as Alexander at Persepolis.

Much of the booty seized during these wars, including regalia such as Bowdich described, eventually found its way into the British Museum, and much of it is here on display. In contrast to this sumptuous court art are the humble village arts consisting of terracottas, wood-carvings and the ever-

fascinating goldweights — so-called because, though cast in brass, they were employed to weigh the local currency, gold dust. This distinction between village and court, and more broadly between the wild, dangerous bush and a secure, formalized, hierarchical society is emphasised throughout, and it is around this that the exhibition has been designed. The visitor enters along a bush path, with funerary terracotta heads scattered in the undergrowth, until he reaches a small compound with thatched huts containing cooking utensils. He is led through displays of clay pipe-bowls, fertility dolls, game-boards and other objects of everyday village life until he reaches an open space before a palace facade flanked by huge blow-ups of photographs of vistas over the tropical rain forest.

Once through the portals of the palace he enters the world of the court, starting with a sacred stoolroom opening on to an inner courtyard and the overwhelming display of gold regalia. At the opening reception this was enhanced by the attendance of the present King of Asante, Otumfuo Nana Opoku Ware II, with his personal entourage, all in their multicoloured cloths and bearing the emblems of their respective rank and position at court.

Those who prefer objects to be neatly arranged in showcases and fully explained in lengthy notes providing date, provenance, function, manufacture, history and so forth, may be dismayed by the present exhibition. It deliberately sets out to put the material available (and there are no loans from outside the British Museum collections) in a setting that can be immediately appreciated by the interested but unformed general public. There are descriptive panels, certainly, but the wording is, mercifully, kept to a minimum and the labels themselves are even briefer. (It has been said that the previous Cook exhibition mounted in the same rooms contained sufficient reading matter to last for seven hours.) Most of the pieces displayed are small-scale and must be seen in showcases, but the intention is always that they should be viewed in a wider perspective; their setting is revealed rather than their function being expounded.

The effect of such a first encounter with these objects must be impressive, and familiarity breeds appreciation, admiration and awe. This is the most ambitious and magnificent exhibition that the Museum of Mankind has put on.

To coincide with this exhibition, British Museum Publications have brought out an expert and well-illustrated book, *The Asante* (192pp, Hardback £12.95, 0 7141 1564 9, Paperback £4 at the exhibition only — £6.95, 0 7141 1563 0) written by the curator of the Museum of Mankind, M.D. McLeod.

## Very big, elephants

By Carol Rumans

Better: A Live Pompey Than A Dead Cyril  
Tricycle Theatre, NW6.

Devised by Clare McIntyre and Stephanie Nunn, this celebration of the art of Steve Smith, based on her poems (some of them set to music) and on excerpts from the novel *Yellow Paper*, could have been more carefully shaped without resorting to the cliché of the "musical biography". But it is largely redeemed by the crisply-paced direction, the rightness and lightness of the music itself and by the vivid performances of four versatile actor-musicians from the Women's Theatre Group. Though it lacks a strong central character (unfortunately for later playwrights and performers, the formidable presence of Glenda Jackson is still conjured by mere mention of the name "Steve"), it gains by giving us more of the real, internal drama of the individual poems.

The performances of the four women are nicely balanced between caricature and character. They both represent different aspects of the Smith psyche, and suggest the limited choices of roles available to an edited woman of her generation. There is, for example, the wilfully happy, robust but over-dressed outcast type represented by Lady "Rogue" Singleton ("I am not a cold woman, Henry. But I do not feel for you! What I feel for the elephants and the

masses! And the general view"). Her opposite number is the self-effacing tragicomic "sorrowful girl", also identified with the Pauline of "Drugs made Pauline vague". This part is given immense pathos by Marilyn Milgrim; her interpretation of "Inference" is one of the emotional focal points of the evening.

By the simple device of scattering among the poems some popular songs of the period (Susan Glanville does a superb parody of a champagne, all low-cut Lurex and Pepsodent charisma) Steve Smith's originality is underlined anew. Her nervous thoughts on jungles and jungle-bushes ruthlessly expose the "Pergian Rosebud" view of the mystic East, as seen through colonial eyes, and what better commentary could the long-suffering "love-songs" have, than her descriptions of sacrificial middle-class wife-dom? This juxtaposition places the poet in her era, and interestingly points up her affinity with the art of lyric-writing. "I like to get off with people", for instance, might easily have passed for a slightly naughty popular song by Noel Coward (that "beautiful beautiful kids" lightly mocked by the silliness of the rhyming-line: "There is no blue like this"). On the other hand, the more Blakean, unfashionably religious side of Steve Smith's demon is little in evidence. "The lion sits within his cage/weeping tears of ruby rage", but in this poem she is generally shown at her most Dorothy Parker-ish, an acid presence among the art deco, whose views on men, England and "the suburban classes" may have been in vogue but have been distilled to pure wit.



A tobacco pipe, from the Asante exhibition.

## The dance from the dancers

By Julie Kavanagh

A Month in the Country  
Royal Opera House, Covent Garden

A review of the three Nattalies who danced in Ashton's *A Month in the Country* this season must inevitably begin as something of a valediction for Lynn Seymour, who created the role. Without the complexity she gave it, the continual nuances — like her lackadaisical gestures that exteriorized Nattalia's self-absorption at the beginning of the ballet — risked seeming one-dimensional and slight. Seymour could orchestrate several dramatic levels at once; her eyes and the rapt arches of her back exposing her emotional submission; her brittle charm and flippancy, conversational hands reflecting her public persona and her guile; while all the time her feet made intricate "kitt one, purr one" patterns across the stage.

The novelistic emphasis in the play, the way it relentlessly discloses the psychological secrets of its characters, has no real equivalent in the ballet. Without soliloquies, the dancer must communicate the drama through the dance: the audience should see her think. This Seymour achieved by her ability to hint at half-tones of emotion, often not explicit in the choreography. To master the given steps is not enough, as Sandra Conley's performance showed. Conley's upright pose and vigorous flapping of her fan as she lay on a chaise longue, Rakitin at her feet, directly contradicted the slyly Nattalia should at first come. Unlike Seymour, Conley never lets you forget that she was at all times a ballerina; her rictus smile disclosed years of classroom drilling, of always being told "give to the front". There is licence in the part for insouciance, Nattalia may well imagine she is in love (the reason no doubt for Francesca Amle's operatic behaviour and verbal arabesques in the current National Theatre production), but in Sandra Conley's case one could detect little thought behind the artificiality.

By allowing herself to slump a little and by languorously moving her fan, Merle Park showed she was more in control of Nattalia's feline behaviour — though her absorption with her fingernails was probably carrying her too far. Park's interpretation, though lacking the subtlety of Seymour's, did, however, capture the gradations of Nattalia's character — utilizable and devious at one moment, winningly girlish the next. Marguerite Porter's performance, on the other hand, gave little sense of this unpredictability; she was evidently not yet accomplished in the transition from the role of Katia (which she created) to that of the heroine. Porter was almost always a soubrette; at first standing broad instead of jethargy, and being indignantly coquettish with Beliaev, Nattalia is a manipulator, a belle dame and a flirt, but Porter imparted sweetness and sensuality. Technically though, her performance was faultless — her beautiful undulating arm almost at times compensating for her paucity of expression; while the

affectionate rapport she has now established with her regular partner, Mark Silver, could in a way be said to have communicated itself as part of the dance.

Silver's interpretation of Beliaev was another example of misplaced dramatic emphasis. More the seducer than an unconscious object of love, he was too sexually responsive in his pas de deux with Vera (impressively danced by Gillian Kingley), too quixotic-looking to be the type to seek Kollo to climb trees and swim on his back, and also too well-dressed, though there he hardly to blame. Michael Coleman, the alternate cast, went to the opposite extreme, reacting stolidly, autistically, to the women's amorous demands. He appeared too old to play convincingly a character who infected a household with his youth, and his dancing was unpleasantly clumsy at times — though this might have been a conscious obsequence to Turgenev's description of Beliaev's physical awkwardness. If so, the interpretation would seem just not viable in a ballet, where gaucherie must be communicated through grace.

With dramatically weak leading dancers, Ashton's elliptical scenario can easily seem a reduction rather than a distillation of the play. The ballet becomes merely decorative and light-weight. Certainly none of the three Nattalies were able to transmit sufficient pathos to counteract Ashton's sentimental interpolation at the end (where Beliaev returns unseen to kiss the long blue ribbons attached to Nattalia's lace petticoat — an incident resembling to derive from a detail in Adolf von Menzel's painting *Der Spaziergang in Gärten*, reproduced on the cover of the Penguin edition of Turgenev's *First Love*). Consequently the stark, elemental beauty of *Les Noëes* that followed came as a welcome antidote to the over-upholstered and frou-frou in the other Russian work.

The Diplomats  
SilentThe Foreign Service,  
and the Cold War  
1933-1947

by Hugh de Santis

Images of the Soviet Union during the formative years of the Cold War are examined in this book. As well as a detailed account of the various personal and official contacts between the two superpowers, the author also considers the historical, cultural, social and economic factors which shaped the behaviour of the policy elite that emerged in the 1930s.

March 1981, £11.95

The City of Chicago Press

125 North Dearborn, London SW1W 9SD

## commentary

## Painting in isolation

By Michael Mason

David Bomberg  
Anthony d'Offuy Gallery

The neglect which David Bomberg suffered for almost the whole of his career is one of the great scandals of modern British painting. It is hard to assess, however, what would have been the consequences of recognition. Bomberg should never have been made to undergo the bitterness of spirit which he seems periodically to have experienced. And his thinking about painting and drawing acquired a vehemence and singularity (and to this extent was disabled from communicating itself to other artists) which must have roots in his isolation. But it is difficult to imagine the work itself developing except from a position of solitariness.

The peculiarity of Bomberg's career is the division between the short early period (of which the *Mud Bath* series is perhaps the most familiar product), and the rest. In the early phase his art did "belong": with Futurism and Vorticism, in a line running from Cubist painting. It showed an adaptability which is unthinkable for the mature Bomberg — an adaptability, in fact, to a style which was alien to him, brilliant in its way and influential though this youthful work was.

The great interest of this exhibition of work from the collection of Bomberg's widow is what it tells about the artist's self-liberation, around 1919-20, from his Cubistic past. All the work is absorbing, but several of the drawings and paintings of the first phase have been exhibited before, if only briefly, and a number of those of the 1930s and later were shown at the Whitechapel in 1979. At the d'Offuy Gallery the two periods are now bridged by novel works of 1919 and 1920: "Barges", "On Stage", and above all the superb large oil-on-paper, "Dancer", which leaves Bomberg's earlier accounts of the favoured subject of the time far in the distance and gasping for breath.

Bomberg's early work, like that of the Vorticists, was more iconic than classical Cubism. A Cubistic spatial ambiguity still mattered, but this was sought more through the physically impossible character of a depicted subject, and less through an ambiguous paint-surface. It was the resulting drawn, sculptural element in these pictures that Bomberg rejected most vigorously in 1919, and which was perhaps the most restrictive and unconvincing feature. (Bomberg was unusual among artists of his general circle in not venturing into three-dimensional work.) He resorted too much to a formula in which an interlocking object with rod-like components — a kind of trellis or strange machine — occupies a foreground plane. The very dark tones that became notorious in Bomberg's later drawings are at this stage used as a background to the machine, or to accentuate the sharp forms of its components.

The preoccupations of the early period perhaps explain why Bomberg often saw his development after 1920 as an exploration



Bomberg's "Self-portrait in profile", 1919-20, from the exhibition reviewed here.

of a new way of drawing — while for the spectator the matter of drawing may seem to be no longer an issue in his work. He learnt to design and model his paintings entirely in roughly-defined areas of colour, and emerged as one of the great colourists of the British tradition (though the thrilling qualities of his colour are already promised in two beautiful, previously unexhibited works in the show: the "Composition with Figures" and "Interior composition", both of 1912-13). Bomberg did continue to draw in black and white, of course, but the medium (as in the landscape sketches of Ronda, Spain) is typically charcoal, used bluntly for the most part and over an exhaustive range of tones.

The episode of Bomberg's escape from Cubism appears to have been accompanied by an interest in self-portraiture, and there are three examples at the d'Offuy Gallery.

## A hunger artist

By Sara Selwood

Picasso Graphics  
Institut Français

The Arts Council in collaboration with the French Institute is celebrating the centenary of Picasso's birth with a travelling exhibition of his graphics. Of the 117 exhibits the majority were produced during the last three decades of Picasso's life.

His mistress Françoise Gilot recalled how, after 1943, Picasso was preoccupied by the need for change. More than anything else, he wanted to achieve that "dramatic movement from one effort to the next". It is precisely this movement the Institute has stressed in its hanging of the exhibition. We find the emaciated figures of "The Frugal Meal" contrasted with a tawdry fantasy, doves of peace with the brutalities of war.

This compulsion in Picasso has given rise to conflicting critical views. John Berger, for example, sees it as symptomatic of what he calls Picasso's "glittering failure"; at the age of sixty-five, by which time he was a millionaire, Picasso was, he argues, merely manifesting a need to reassert his artistic vitality. Christopher Green, who selected the exhibition and wrote the extremely lucid catalogue, is less opinionated. He thinks that "even in wealth, surrounded by admirers,

in these studies Bomberg inspects both himself and, through his new treatment of form, his art. There is a related picture in the exhibition, however, which looks almost allegorical in its comment. It is a quite uncharacteristic gouache of 1919 called "The Artist", in which a figure in a strange Stanley Spencer-like perspective is pressed down on his paper or canvas, and caged in by a series of angular forms. To Bomberg the new methods of his art were not only technically liberating; they were a means of access to a spirituality in the physical world. For the character of his mystical experience we must rely on his own reports, perhaps, rather than the pictures. As with Kandinsky, the exhilaration and weight of the works, pictorially, may be felt a sufficient motive for their creation. But if it had been, David Bomberg would probably have rested content with the sterile repertoire of a Wyndham Lewis.

With so much text, and even more sub-text, missing, there is no psychological room for Diana Rigg, as Hedda, to develop either her hysteria or her perverse heroism. She burns the manuscript "baby" as coolly and with the same faint disgust as if it were a bag of disposable nappies. Her social aplomb and sheer hold on everyone are terrific, but she moves in a middle range of emotions where issues of birth and death (and even copulation) seem strangely irrelevant. There is no trace of what Ibsen called the "demonic", or the "deep poetry". In her, nor does Philip Bond's Lovborg suggest any of the "upward" surge which Ibsen speaks of. The Dionysian "videolates in his hair" become simply hedonistic "wine and roses". The most moving figure is Tesman (Denis Lill) in his owl-like glimmerings of what Lovborg's book has achieved.

The medium's demand for glamour necessitates not only that Hedda's hair be thicker and her waist thinner than Ibsen specified, but also that everything and everyone round the bored heroine seem highly polished.

But if the screen world is a far cry from Ibsen's, the translation into the visual medium of the play's technique of abrupt dialogue is at times superb. The camera is made to concentrate on groupings and faces. I shall long remember the oblique close-up of a predatory Hedda leading a helpless Tesman out, at the end of Act 2, and even longer the three horrified and uncomprehending faces looking on at Hedda in the closing moments of the play, while the camera mercifully keeps away from the corpse itself.

## Taming Hedda

By Inga-Stina Ewbank

Hedda Gabler  
Yorkshire Television

Suddenly, in these days of frozen academic posts, *Hedda Gabler* has acquired a new and ironic relevance. Dr Jørgen Tesman's easy expectation of a professorship, and the equally easy loss — by plot — of the only rival Cultural History Man, must be the envy of every aspiring academic. The conflagration of Lovborg's manuscript has always been, more even than the Bakings of Betsy, the scholar's nightmare; but the task which falls into Tesman's lap — editing Lovborg's foul papers, with Theda Elvsted as an unpaid and devoted research assistant — must now seem like the dream of everyone doomed to publish or be redundant. The play is Ibsen's nearest approach to campus drama.

To be fair, these thoughts are prompted not only by Yorkshire Television's presentation of John Osborne's adaptation of Ibsen's play (March 3), but also by Osborne's characteristically aggressive attempt, in the *TV Times*, to define his vision of the play. Behaving like one of those "dull, poetic academics" whom he sees Lovborg as typifying, he leads us to a vague solipsism: "The play is about many things, above all itself and Ibsen himself". Luckily it is the tone rather than the thought of his article which reflects what he has done to *Hedda*. Fulminating, like Chronos eating his own offspring, against contemporary television drama about problems — "simply sociological doodleheads, furiously clustered out from lumpy polytechnics and bedstrider dens of radical discontent" — he sounds for all the world like a Bill Maitland. Roughly contemporary with *Inadmissible Evidence* was the solid and sympathetic *TV Hedda* of Ingrid Bergman; a brief generation later, the whiff of time has brought Osborne the chance of turning Ibsen's play into a vehicle for the discontent and self-disgust of Hedda.

The result is both exciting and frustrating. Condensing the play into the one-and-a-half-hours' traffic of the screen makes it furiously fast, at the expense of coherence and motivation. The play already has difficult transitions — such as Mrs Elvsted's from shocked grief to editorial labour — and these become pure shorthand. So does Hedda's decision to kill herself, and the signs of her pregnancy must have been missed by naïvetés. It was like watching a cartoon version of the play — an excellent cartoon, with clear, crisp outlines marked by an often felicitously "free" translation but also ineffectually lacking in dimension.

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Oxford  
University PressJane Austen's  
'Sir Charles  
Grandison'

Edited by Brian Southam

'Sir Charles Grandison' is Jane Austen's only surviving attempt to write a play. It has never before been published and enriches our knowledge of the private Jane Austen. According to family tradition the play was dictated to her by her niece Anna. Brian Southam questions this tradition, for the early scenes of the play appear to have been written before Anna was born, and completed before she was seven years old. £7.95

Joseph  
ChamberlainA Political Study  
Richard Jay

This study gives an account of the disruptive impact which Chamberlain had upon the politics of his age, and the apparent paradoxes of his career. The author analyses the myths which have grown up around Chamberlain's role in the major controversies of the time, and in a long concluding essay reassesses his political importance. £16.95 19 March

The Origins of the  
Christian Mystical  
Tradition from  
Plato to Denys

Andrew Louth

Scholars of the patristic era have paid more attention to the dogmatic tradition in their period than to the development of Christian mystical theology. This book aims to redress the balance. It will be of particular interest to those who are concerned with the well-spring of their own prayer, and especially those who seek to understand the diverse, and often conflicting, influences that are to be found in Christian spirituality. £12.50

Studies on the  
Text of Euripides

James Diggle

In this book Dr Diggle discusses the text or interpretation of a large number of passages from the six plays which he has edited in *Euripides Fabulae*, toms II (Oxford Classical Texts). The plays are *Suppliants*, *Electra*, *Heracles*, *Troades*, *Iphigenia in Tauris*, and *Ion*. £12.50

## Britannia at Bay

The Defence of the  
British Empire Against  
Japan 1931-1941

Paul Haggie

This study explores the role played by Japan in British foreign and defence policy in the 1930s. Much has been written on the threat posed to imperial security by Germany and Italy. Little attention has been paid to the third dimension of appeasement, the threat posed by Japan in the Far East. Appreciation of the Far Eastern threat leads to new perspectives on British Policy during the 1930s. £16

John Coombe











nation, the need for which was universally accepted in greater or lesser form. For the fascists also, 1940 had been an intolerable humiliation, though their response to that event was intensely paradoxical. While Vichy opted for a return to the land and Maurras for "la France seule" ("the France alone"), the fascists, overwhelmed by the intrinsic corruption of the nation, offered as the answer to defeat at the hands of Germany the imitation of the best itself. France might once again be herself, but only if it was Nazified and integrated in a new and European fascist order.

Like the pre-war fascists, the wartime collaborationists were a varied group. Some came from the moderate left, others from the Catholic right. There were intellectual fascists like the melancholy Drieu la Rochelle, a man of great sensibility who admired the plebeian fascist Doriot because he swayed so. Others were plantists and pacifists like D  at, who after asking Frenchmen in 1939 if they wished to die to keep Hitler out of Danzig, was, as it were, asking the volunteers of the Waffen SS-Charlemagne division in 1945 to die in order to keep him there. Most disturbingly, however, a great many collaborationists, like many collaborators, were plain and unintellectual men and women, like the *d  m  n  geur* Darnand, an unusually brave man who failed to make his mark on life after a heroic stint in the First World War and became a much scorned and rather excitable mover of furniture.

Bertram Gordon's book has as its focus the varieties of collaborationism and the communities that link it to pre-war France, but he takes these themes in a narrow way. If Tournoux's book is anecdotal, Gordon's is severely academic and political. Fascism is a cultural phenomenon does not much interest him. The literary heroes of the fascist Vichy - Drieu, Brasillach, and C  l  as - are hardly mentioned here. They receive less attention than the ageing and deranged Alphonse de Chateaubriant, the author in 1912 of the archetypal and *v  l  ch* *Maistre des Lourdines*, who happened to be also the head of the Groupe Collaboration circle, a cultural organization with shadowy political pretensions to which Gordon attaches surprising importance since it is only of interest as the one respectable French fascist group, and as such a bridge between the notables and the more plebeian action groups.

Gordon's lack of concern for cultural matters makes it hard to understand why the Paris-based fascists were hostile not only to Vichy conservatives, Gaullists, Catholics, Jews, Masons, Radicals, Socialists and Communists, but to each other. It also makes it hard to grasp the divisive background of his central concern, namely that a "continuing process of fission" shaped the history of the collaborationist camp, afflicted with a continuing fragmentation that destroyed any remote possibility of effective political action under the occupation.

Gordon excels in his description of the shift of fascist momentum from D  at in late 1941, to Doriot in 1942, to Darnand in late 1943, and in general way from reform and political action to violent anti-Communism, and finally to a mindless activism that subverted order while claiming to defend it. D  at was a fascist of a moderate sort. An anti-clerical Nationalist and a professor of philosophy, intermittently and semantically interested in economic planning, D  at had little charismatic appeal. Doriot by contrast was the closest French embodiment of the *F  hrerprinzip*. In the summer of 1940 when the Nazis and the Soviets were in accord, Doriot did not have much to say

and he tiresomely presented himself as "l'homme du march  ." But he came to prominence with the German invasion of Russia and the creation of the "all-party" fascist LVT, the *L  gion des Volontaires*. Francis, eager to fight on the eastern front. But Doriot's movement, which might destabilize French politics, was at once encouraged and thwarted by the Germans. A void ensued that was filled by Darnand's milice.

Unlike the self-started Paris fascists, the Milice was a debased by-product of the *L  gion des Anciens Combattants*, Vichy's pathetic response to D  at's call for a "parti unique." The *miliciens*, often drawn from extreme reactionary and Catholic milieus, had volunteered to fight insurgency in France rather than Bolshevism in Europe. Their goal was modest, and Darnand remained throughout personally loyal to Laval. He refused to sign the common declaration of D  at and Doriot urging Vichy to side openly with the Germans. At the same time, Darnand's men were fascist activists who were infiltrating the state bureaucracy and murdering in the name of P  tain, but very much on their own terms. Where Laval in 1943 was ever more cautious, Darnand became aggressively pro-German. His presence as Minister for the Maintenance of Order was a renunciation of Vichy's reactionary conservatism and his subservience to Germany was a renunciation of the fascist dream of a regenerated and independent France. Only the Germans had their way, as Doriot discovered when Hitler let it be known in September 1942 that a fascist government was not part of his plan for France.

As Gordon ably shows, a general principle was at play here, since in France, Italy and Hungary (he might have added Tunisia) the Nazis turned to the local fascists only when all else had failed. Drieu may have believed in a fascist Europe, but Hitler never did. A French fascist government was indeed set up headed by Doriot, but only in the Bavarian "boche-berne" d  cor of Sigmarinberg after France had been liberated and fascist politics had become pure fantasy. Fascists and Vichyites were dishonoured and France remained in the end tranquil and productive, a great myth cow: one-third of the French Vichy was absorbed by Germany in late 1943-44 when German exactions in France accounted for nearly half of the loot that was being pilloaged from occupied Europe. Having nothing to lean on save for the presence of German arms, P  tain, Laval, D  at, Doriot and Darnand were forced to pipe a tune they did not like for a patron who paid himself at their expense.

Gordon tells this story very well indeed, and it is for this very reason difficult to accept his insistence that it was the "continuing fragmentation" of the collaborationist movement that kept it from being an effective political force. To be sure, there was more disagreement at the top than at the bottom where fascist militants, most of them from Paris and the Marseilles-Nice area, floated ceaselessly from one *parti unique* to another. There was much uniformity in the rank and file and Gordon shows that it is too schematic to think of D  at's RNP as a left-fascism in contrast to the right-fascism of Doriot's PPF. Motives were often interchangeable and disagreement at the top did keep the fascist movement from coalescing. But the whole matter is moot and academic. Given the overall relationship of collaborationism to French public opinion and German needs it is hard to see that political fragmentation was really as important as Gordon makes it out to be. Gordon, it should be noted, is quite consistent on this issue, and his *id  e fixe* colours

## Glorious neglect

By John Sturrock

LOUIS-F  D  RARD C  LINE  
L  gion    Albert Paraz  
1947-1957  
Ch  t  s C  line No 6  
Edited by Jean-Paul Louis  
467pp. Paris: Gallimard

C  line and Albert Paraz were pen-friends, never intimates. Paraz was a novelist who turned campaigner and pamphleteer after the war in generous defence of C  line, whose novel he thought should be spared the vilification heaped on their collaborationist authors. It was C  line's narrative and uneasy spirit, together with the enviable vitality of his prose, which appealed to Paraz, not his often disgraceful ideas. The two of them corresponded freely, even to the point of C  line's private life in Denmark, which he wrote freely once he had Lucette, his wife.

been exiled, in 1951, and had come back to live in Meudon.

In these *Lettres    Albert Paraz* there are 353 letters by C  line, two-thirds of them written during his bitterly resented absence from France. Like so much of his now considerable published correspondence, they are wearily self-centred. C  line vituperates without break against the cold and the privations of his quarters in Denmark; against those in France he even gets him shot as a traitor; against others in France who are not more guilty than himself of sympathizing with the Germans but who have escaped all punishment and are now thriving against the greed and dishonesty of the publishers who have exploited him; against as pressure-builders, the whole milieu. Creation. There are flashes of clarity, too, medical encouragement for Paraz, who was conspiciously an occasional recognition of kindness done in Denmark to himself or to others. Lucette, his wife.



Making your own about-face. This "Self Portrait" (1967) by Freddy Fox is taken from about 70 photographs, a collection of brilliant, original pictures edited by Chris Steele-Perkins with commentaries by Chris Steele-Perkins and William Messer (146pp. Arts Council of Great Britain.   9.95. 0 7287 0309 6). Fox is the inventor of the R.E. Periphery Camera which enables, as in this photograph, all the surfaces of a subject to be shown simultaneously in a single plane.

his interpretation of events; much attention, for example, is focused on the political disputes of Delonco, the former Cagouard, and D  at in 1941 and on the Tunisian episode of late 1942-43 when the Germans, much pressed on all sides, allowed Georges Guillaud, a twenty-eight-year-old PPF stalwart, to take over the administration of the colony.

Gordon's book has many striking qualities. It is clearly laid out and it is a mine of information. The political history of collaborationism has now been done. At the same time, and by the author's own admission, many of the social and cultural aspects of fascism that have most interested its students are not to be found in this book. Mr Gordon is a historian rather than a moralist.

Maurice Rajfus inverts these priorities. His book also has as its central themes continuity and collaboration *d  at*, though taken in a very different way. The book, like its title, is designed to hurt. It is vengeful, sometimes foolish, but always serious. Its argument is simply stated. As is now well known, thanks in large part to the remarkable book of David Weinberg, *Les Juifs    Paris de 1933    1939*, Jews in France fell into two broad categories. On one side were assimilated Sephardic Jews from the Midi (like Pierre Mendes-France) as well as the more recently assimilated but also intensely patriotic Jews from Alsace (like Blum). These were Jews who thought of themselves as Frenchmen who happened to be Jewish. On the other side were Jews, most of them in Paris, some of them naturalized and others not, who had come from Russia since 1890 and behind since the war. The assimilated Jews were bourgeois, ardent, often conservative and sometimes chauvinistic. Eastern European Jews were usually working-class and sometimes Communist,

as well they might be since their conditions of life in the eastern quarters of Paris were appalling. Many of them had in any case come to Paris rather than London or New York because France was the motherland of Revolution. That is the background of Rajfus's story. The rest deals with the French Judenrat, the Union G  n  rale des Isra  lites de France set up in November 1941 by Vichy under German pressure, and largely staffed by the more established, assimilated Jews. With great bitterness Rajfus, whose parents died in Auschwitz, describes the UGIF as a lunatic bureaucracy whose ultimate "objective" purpose was to arrange the deportation of eastern Jews, regardless of the "subjective" intentions of the Jews who ran it.

The book has been sternly received in France. Annie Kriegel, once a Stalinist of the most dogmatic sort and today a Zionist of the unbending kind, has described it as a Trotskyite piece, "sournoisement" conceived. Trotskyite it may be, *sournois* it is not. L  on Pollakov has presented it as "un livre absurde", not only highly tendentious, but badly researched; and it is indeed absurd of Rajfus to pass moral judgment on French Jews because the Germans were allowed by Vichy to deport some Jews more than others. Rajfus sets this dreadful episode in a Marxist context of the exploitation of class by class. He would have us believe that the staff of the UGIF was more evil than the Jews of the eastern European Judenrat, whose motives, however base, were not polluted by the sordid concerns of class. Bourgeois to the core, the notable of the UGIF, as Rajfus sees it, did precisely what the Germans wanted. They were to the Jews what Vichy was to France. Their files were in order and the mail was promptly answered. That point is not absurd, and Pierre Vidal-Naquet cautiously endorses it. In his preface, but many of Rajfus's statements are outrageous. It really does not serve much purpose to write that the officials of the UGIF, not content with being gaolers, "acceptent de convoier les enfants qu'ils ont exp  di  s vers les camps de concentration". Rajfus's message would have been better served had his indignation been more controlled.

There is little to warm to otherwise in this bulky volume, unless it is the energy and virtuosity of C  line's tirades, themselves limbering-up exercises for the postwar books already in his mind. There is not much to be learnt, either, except that, isolated though he was on his Baltic coast, he was kept remarkably fully informed about affairs in France, notably about the slow progress of the case against him in the courts. The names of many individuals, publications and episodes of wartime or postwar French history come into these letters and call for annotation. This has been sufficiently provided by Jean-Paul Louis.

The *Lettres    Albert Paraz* are one more addition to the record, showing how seethingly unpleasant C  line could be for what he had published and done in wartime. They exemplify the contradiction of a writer who luxuriated, angrily and spitefully in being a famous object of neglect.

overtly anti-Jewish edicts of Vichy in October 1940. Blum said after Munich that he had accepted that accord with a "l  te soulagement". Yes, someone added, "comme quand on chie dans son pantalon".

Good, bad or indifferent, all these books are to be welcomed for reasons that have little to do with their intrinsic worth, for it may well be that they are so many signs that the French are now better able to face the facts of Vichy than ever before. Such a change of heart could have real effect because the backdrop of French politics since the war has not been, surprisingly, the unprecedented pace of industrial change but the purely institutional themes of defeat in 1940, Vichy, and its sequels. True, recent changes in the material structure of France have been enormous: its prosperity has all but vanished; the *Paris parisiens* are a thing of the past. France with its fifty million inhabitants is the fifth industrial power in the world. Its economy is modern, efficiently managed, and extremely dynamic. But its political culture remains archaic, hierarchic, ideological, divisive and verbally intemperate.

Vichy is still a touchstone. The structure of postwar French political life parallels that of the last century: from 1815 to 1934, French politics repeatedly reenacted the Great Revolution and had tangential connections to the economic and social evolution of the country. In the same way, contemporary French politics ignore late industrialization and the society that it has spawned. That is why French politics today are a great bore.

Why contemporary French politics go back to 1940 is a complicated story that is interwoven in the fabric of modern French history. But how this has come to pass is clearer. French conservatives were bitterly chastened by Vichy's catastrophic d  nouement. The same was true for the R  gime, unless the bombing of the Rue Copernic turns out to be their work, which appears unlikely. Anti-Semitism lacks political force in France because the heirs of Xavier Vallat are necessarily mindful of the unexpected consequences that cultural anti-Semitism based on *raison d'  tat* can have.

But the more durable influence of Vichy on French politics lies elsewhere. In fact, that the deeply, personally felt defeat and shame of France in 1940-44 has surely been a basic factor in the prolonged success of Gaullism with its myth of *la France seule* and the grating, occasionally acerbic nationalism that it has engendered and which has often provided the mode in which French officials have considered the question of France's place in the world. P  tain's trial was the trial of a *p  rs   indigne* and this drama has served to legitimize the compensatory and only slightly less authoritarian nationalism of de Gaulle. A healthier, more modest and resigned understanding of what really happened in 1940-44 might help to release French culture from this debilitating historical burden.

JAMES C. MCCLELLAND:  
*Autocrats and Academics*  
Education, Culture, and Society in Tsarist Russia  
164pp. University of Chicago Press.   9.80.  
0 226 55661 1

"I erected a mill, so my successors will be forced to bring some water to it." James C. McClelland, in his pitifully informative history of Russian education and its social consequences before the Revolution, quotes this answer of Peter the Great's to the question why he had decided to found an Academy of Sciences in a country lacking a proper system of primary or secondary education. Not that Peter left the mill without any water at all. He did open schools, but found pupils so unwilling to attend them and parents so opposed to sending them there that he went beyond the modern practice of dispensing education free of charge and had a salary paid to the pupils: they were deemed to be performing a service to the State and were rewarded accordingly.

It is typical of Russian traditions that education, not having the monastic origins it had in the West, should have been considered as a function of public service, to be judged in accordance with its usefulness to the State. Professor McClelland distinguishes "four basic attitudes toward education", which he considers typical of Russian Imperial officialdom: insistence on government monopoly of administrative control and reform initiative; the recognition that only a properly organized educational system could create skills enabling Russia to compete on an international scale; belief - based on an inferiority complex - in the superiority of Western educational methods which should, therefore, be adopted (and not adapted to Western ideas - political, social and philosophic - and changed to the political stability of the tsarist order). How to reconcile the last two attitudes was, understandably, one of the Imperial government's sorest problems. The government solved it, partially and only in the reign of the last emperor, by dropping its fear of Western ideas or, at least, by acting as if it had done so.

Russian liberal opinion fought the government tooth and nail over its educational policy and was convinced that it differed from it on every important point in the attitudes that dictated that policy. We now realize that the two contestants differed little from each other except on the subject of government control, and even there the government was forced to yield, to a very large extent, in the course of the two decades preceding the Revolution. Both sides believed in the danger inherent in Western political and social ideas for the survival of the Imperial order. The difference was that the government regarded this danger with alarm or resignation,

while liberal opinion welcomed it with hope or *Schadenfreude*.

Since Russian education had been built from the top down, Russia's Academy of Sciences pre-dated the universities; when the network of universities was established in the early nineteenth century (apart from Moscow university, founded in 1755) professors were invited to lecture before there were students to listen to them; universities in their turn had, up to the mid-nineteenth century, more government money spent on them than secondary schools, and, till the beginning of the present century, both secondary schools and universities were more generously financed than primary schools. It is McClelland's case that for all Imperial Russia's remarkable achievements in the educational field, this topsy-turvyism (relatively to Western Europe) remained the hallmark of its educational policy, being responsible for its cultural and social contrasts, for the growing disparity between city and countryside, and for the country's social and political instability, but also for the mixture of "traditional backwardness [and] exciting dynamism" so characteristic of the country before the Revolution. By 1913, a country with a greater percentage of illiterates than any other major European power (even though the total was dwindling fast) "was the second largest producer of books in the world [the largest, according to one of McClelland's sources], ranking close to Germany in the number of titles, and equalling the total of France, the United States and Great Britain combined . . . produced the ballet of Fokine and Diaghilev and the music of Stravinsky which shocked the Russian audiences before [the First World War] . . . produced a Mendeleev, a Pavlov, and carried more students in higher educational institutions than any other country in the world except the United States. And . . . experienced during the 1890s one of the fastest industrial growth rates of any country in the world".

But-and this is the kernel of McClelland's argument - all this was achieved on too narrow an educational basis. Too narrow not in the sense of being too exclusive, but in the sense of being too scholastic. The system was also top-heavy. It was certainly not exclusive either socially or on "sexist" grounds. "It is likely", says McClelland, referring to all institutions of higher education, including universities, "that the Russian student body was considerably more democratic in its social origins than that of other European countries of the time." At the same time, the ratio of women to men students was probably much higher than it was elsewhere: on the eve of the First World War women accounted for about a third of all students, while "the general secondary schools of the Empire were educating considerably more girls than boys".

What made the educational system top-heavy was, principally, the insufficiency of primary education compared to that at the higher stages. According to McClelland, this was due to a variety of causes: lack of

personnel to staff an adequate number of schools, the relative ease with which higher education establishments could be set up, funded and controlled, the centralization of Russian political life and the consequent weakness of local authorities, and - the most fundamental of all reasons - the high value set both by the government and by public opinion on advanced Western academic models, the imitation of which absorbed most of the available funds and scarce educational resources.

However, in the early years of the present century the government decided to reverse its policy and double the share of the budget spent on primary education. Professor McClelland calls this "the single most important and beneficial policy change" introduced by the Ministry of Education in the course of the last reign, though in his view this was not really enough: the ratio of university students to primary schoolchildren was still too high and was even increasing. He might have added, however, that as a result of government policy there were, by 1915, three times as many pupils in government primary schools as there were at the beginning of the reign twenty years previously, that more than half of all children of relevant age were receiving primary education and that a bill was introduced that year in the Duma to make primary education universal and compulsory. Unfortunately, he makes no mention of the impressive parallel effort made by private initiative in founding primary schools, including so-called "schools of literacy", which accepted pupils of all ages free of charge or at a nominal fee equivalent to a penny or two a month. In number, particularly in the more remote or inaccessible areas, they exceeded government-sponsored schools.

Secondary education also made impressive strides and women's education, in particular, "witnessed tremendous expansion during the last twenty years of the empire". A great deal of experimentation (some of it described by McClelland) went on with different types of schools set up both by the government and by private individuals and institutions and a plan had been approved (not mentioned by McClelland) for the introduction of compulsory secondary education by 1925, raising the school-leaving age to fifteen. A few boarding (officially known as "privileged") schools (e.g. the Imperial Lyceum, the School of Jurisprudence, girls' institutions) were run on lines very comparable to those of British public schools and with a similar class bias. The main differences were that the number of children involved was extremely small and that the upper forms of these "privileged" schools enjoyed university status.

But though the numerical inadequacy of both primary and secondary schools was being rapidly righted - even if not rapidly enough - the "scholasticism" of Russian education as a whole still remained, in the view of the "growing progressive pedagogical movement in Russia" (with which even Scotland is, for once, given a separate chapter in this history).

But it is in this division of chapters according to countries (that one's first doubts arise. Used together with a deliberate reduction of political narrative to bare outlines and a concentration on the analysis of structure, this organization of chapters has led the author to a good deal of repetition and of a rather overloaded style. More important, this chapter division has not allowed him to discuss systematically the economic development of Europe as a whole nor its common social and political institutions. The reader has to pick up what he can in different places about population and family structure, about village and field systems, about merchants, trading companies and banks, about crafts and guilds and manufacturers. Even the development of capitalism, which is constantly referred to, is neither defined nor expounded in any detail.

Kiernan proclaims himself a Marxist, but he admits that Marx, as a "guide through the Inferno and Purgatorio of the past" is "unlike Dante's omniscient conductor". Apart from pointing to a connection between social structure and political institutions and behaviour - a connection which, in some form or other, even those of us who do not profess to be Marxists have now accepted for some time - Marx turned out to

be a broken reed. When Kiernan mentions him, it is usually to point out, with a faint air of apology, that he didn't really get it right. By temperament and sympathy, Kiernan seems to be more an anarchist than a communist and he quotes Kropotkin with effect and approval. Where he does follow Marx, it tends to produce fuzziness and misconceptions. The word feudal, for instance, becomes an all-purpose term of opprobrium for the European nobility. It is never defined, and statements such as "Absolutism" was the highest stage of feudalism much more than the first stage of bourgeois or middle-class hegemony" are virtually meaningless. In other places Kiernan himself insists, quite rightly, that the monarchies of the period cannot be regarded simply as the agents of a specific class but had their own interests and patterns of behaviour. Indeed, he does not even believe in the existence of Marxist classes in this period. He is right, too, in saying that Catholic and Huguenot noblemen in France were quite capable of co-operating against revolting peasants; but it is a misunderstanding of the aristocratic mentality of the period to argue that fear of popular uprisings induced Henry IV to become a Catholic or that Richelieu was "angling for businessmen's approval".

Most misleading of all are the results of the pervasive Marxist teleology with its value judgments on the progressive or reactionary nature of institutions and events.

McClelland entirely agrees, as one of the reasons for the country's educational backwardness. Another was the failure to adapt to Russian conditions an educational system borrowed from Germany. McClelland perceives two consequences of this, both equally threatening to the stability of the Imperial order. One was that "the universities' stress on pure learning did not provide the country's elite youth with skills which the empire so desperately needed", and the other that the universities "helped to produce a disaffected intelligentsia". They bred, as McClelland observes, an attitude of "self-righteousness" among students which "encouraged confrontation with the authorities rather than innovative reform efforts within society". At the beginning of this century the use of university premises for protest meetings all too often competed with their use as lecture halls, and the social-democratic newspaper *Iskra* appealed to the public to "let only one science be taught in educational institutions - the science of revolution". 1908 may have been an exceptional year in Western, particularly French, universities; in pre-revolutionary Russia it would have been considered fairly normal.

Educational experimentation was at least as typical of Russia's higher educational establishments during the reign of the last Russian emperor as it was of primary and secondary schools. Apart from the twelve State universities in existence throughout the Empire by 1917 (with nine more projected), McClelland mentions a number of institutes, colleges, academies, etc. founded at the turn of the present century. His special praise goes to the Finance Ministry's Polytechnical Institutes whose "scholarly analysis of technological development in the broad context of general growth" was adopted by other technological institutes and laid much of the groundwork for the Soviet Union's Five-Year plans after the Revolution. Strangely enough, Russian educational establishments sponsored by the military authorities were usually in the forefront of experimentation. Army secondary schools were always more liberal in spirit than those of the Education Ministry, and the first Russian higher educational institution in the mid-nineteenth century to admit women was the army's medical-surgical Academy (where before the Revolution Pavlov conducted most of his physiological research). In the early years of the present century the first systematic courses in child psychology at university level were started under the auspices of the Ministry of War. Shortly after, these courses developed into the Pedagogical Academy, the first of its kind in Russia.

Even the first and most famous of Russia's "People's" or "Free" (i.e. privately funded and supported) universities, outside government control, was founded in Moscow in 1908 - by a wealthy general, A.L. Shaniavsky, and appropriately named after him. The Shaniavsky University, which had

an equal number of men and women students, was "free" in more senses than one since neither examinations nor tuition fees were compulsory. It was not, as McClelland thinks, "the only private municipal university in Russian history", but it was the first one. By 1917 there were about thirty of these "Free" universities spread all over the country from the Baltic Provinces to Central Asia. To these, in the years immediately preceding the First World War, were added so-called "Peasant Universities" founded on the Scandinavian model, in which agricultural subjects and practical work predominated. All these "Free" universities, whether "People's" or "Peasant", were, of course, closed after the Revolution as were all primary and secondary schools established under private auspices.

In the final analysis, McClelland's account of the Imperial government's educational policy seems to support Patrick Alston's conclusion (*Education and the State in Tsarist Russia*) that "in general education (sardom was working hard, productively and intelligently at the moment when military disaster retired it from history". McClelland quotes it, but remarks that his own conclusions are "somewhat different". In his view the Russian government largely nullified its own educational efforts by getting its priorities wrong: fewer universities and more vocational and primary schools would have been more useful and would have spread education more widely among the population. This, he thinks, would have produced greater social stability, which Russia needed more than her, admittedly impressive, cultural and scientific achievements. For all their impressiveness, the country could not really afford them since they diverted resources from more practical training and wider education at a lower level. He agrees with the Tsar's Finance Minister Witte that "education foments social revolution, but popular ignorance loses wars" and then concludes that the Russian autocracy impaled itself "on both horns of the dilemma: it provided enough education to foment a revolution, but not enough to avoid losing a war". This may well have been true, but in view of the effort deployed in the last reign (as, indeed, described by Professor McClelland) to universalize primary and secondary education and make both compulsory, the Russian government seems to have been aware of the dilemma and to have been trying to get itself off its horns before the war "retired it from history". The contradiction between Alston's judgment and McClelland's appears to me, therefore, illusory. It is unfortunate that an appraisal of private initiative in the educational sphere, which did so much to supplement government action in the early twentieth century, is beyond the latter's terms of reference. But this does not prevent *Autocrats and Academics* from being a stimulating and, on the whole, scrupulously fair work, an important contribution to the history of pre-revolutionary Russia.

## The gold and the iron

By H. G. Koenigsberger

V. G. KIERNAN:  
*State and Society in Europe 1550-1650*  
309pp. Oxford: Blackwell,   12.  
0 631 10681 2

The hundred years from 1550 to 1650, give or take a decade or two at the beginning and the end, have long been seen as the crucial hinge, between medieval and modern Europe. This was the period when the European overseas discoveries of the previous hundred years began to have an impact on both the consciousness of Europeans and on their way of life; when social and psychological changes released by the Reformation exploded into the worst civil and international wars Europe had seen since the fall of the Roman Empire; when monarchies and parliaments struggled for supremacy and men debated the justification of absolute or constitutional rule and of the whole problem of morality in political action. This was also the period when the very foundations of European philosophy and of men's ways of thinking were called into doubt when the methodologies and ethos of the sciences were constructed. And, Europe: Very properly, for a professor emeritus of the University of Edinburgh,

even Scotland is, for once, given a separate chapter in this history.

But it is in this division of chapters according to countries (that one's first doubts arise. Used together with a deliberate reduction of political narrative to bare outlines and a concentration on the analysis of structure, this organization of chapters has led the author to a good deal of repetition and of a rather overloaded style. More important, this chapter division has not allowed him to discuss systematically the economic development of Europe as a whole nor its common social and political institutions. The reader has to pick up what he can in different places about population and family structure, about village and field systems, about merchants, trading companies and banks, about crafts and guilds and manufacturers. Even the development of capitalism, which is constantly referred to, is neither defined nor expounded in any detail.

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# Scholasticism for the State

By Kyril FitzLyon

McClelland entirely agrees, as one of the reasons for the country's educational backwardness. Another was the failure to adapt to Russian conditions an educational system borrowed from Germany. McClelland perceives two consequences of this, both equally threatening to the stability of the Imperial order. One was that "the universities' stress on pure learning did not provide the country's elite youth with skills which the empire so desperately needed", and the other that the universities "helped to produce a disaffected intelligentsia". They bred, as McClelland observes, an attitude of "self-righteousness" among students which "encouraged confrontation with the authorities rather than innovative reform efforts within society". At the beginning of this century the use of university premises for protest meetings all too often competed with their use as lecture halls, and the social-democratic newspaper *Iskra* appealed to the public to "let only one science be taught in educational institutions - the science of revolution". 1908 may have been an exceptional year in Western, particularly French, universities; in pre-revolutionary Russia it would have been considered fairly normal.

Educational experimentation was at least as typical of Russia's higher educational establishments during the reign of the last Russian emperor as it was of primary and secondary schools. Apart from the twelve State universities in existence throughout the Empire by 1917 (with nine more projected), McClelland mentions a number of institutes, colleges, academies, etc. founded at the turn of the present century. His special praise goes to the Finance Ministry's Polytechnical Institutes whose "scholarly analysis of technological development in the broad context of general growth" was adopted by other technological institutes and laid much of the groundwork for the Soviet Union's Five-Year plans after the Revolution. Strangely enough, Russian educational establishments sponsored by the military authorities were usually in the forefront of experimentation. Army secondary schools were always more liberal in spirit than those of the Education Ministry, and the first Russian higher educational institution in the mid-nineteenth century to admit women was the army's medical-surgical Academy (where before the Revolution Pavlov conducted most of his physiological research). In the early years of the present century the first systematic courses in child psychology at university level were started under the auspices of the Ministry of War. Shortly after, these courses developed into the Pedagogical Academy, the first of its kind in Russia.

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# Travelling piously

By Valerie Adams

DONALD R. HOWARD:  
Writers and Pilgrims  
Medieval Pilgrimage Narratives and Their  
Posterity  
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\$6.50.  
0 520 03926 2

Approaching Jerusalem in 1483, a Dominican friar from Ulm pauses in the valley of Elah to observe that here David overthrew Goliath. He admires the terebinth trees and describes their fruit. "So we climbed up out of the valley of the Terebinth... and came to gardens of fruit-trees, pot-herbs, and figs as we went up among dry stone walls. Casting our eyes to the right, lo! like a flash of lightning the oft-mentioned and often-to-be-mentioned holy city of Jerusalem shone forth." The party dismount to pray, their cheeks wet with joy. Then "all together began to sing *Te Deum laudamus*, but in a low and subdued voice, that we might not offend our escort... So we sang aloud only with the voice of our minds, because the joy wherewith we rejoiced was deep and great, beyond what any outward words could express."

Thus Felix Fabri, keen amateur naturalist, courageous traveller, good companion, meticulous observer and exemplary pilgrim to the Holy Land. In lighter moments, though constantly aware of that conflict between *curiositas* and *pietas*, so interestingly discussed by Christian Zacher in his book *Custody and Pilgrimage* (1977), Fabri will delight the reader with anecdotes — of the fat drunken pilgrim, for example, who falls down a non-existent ladder and is furious when Fabri "laughs immoderately". It is surely his enthusiasm for this attractive writer that is behind one of the claims Donald Howard makes about his own incoherent, self-indulgent, carelessly-written but in a way entertaining book — that it is "an aerial view of a forgotten genre", the genre of medieval narratives of pilgrimages to Palestine. But it is not. He mentions a few of the better-known accounts, written between the eleventh and fifteenth centuries, but gives no real idea of what they were like, of resemblances or developments. The short section on them is only the prelude to an encomium on Fabri, whose he calls, with more exuberance than precision, as "the Proust of the genre". Fabri is no Proust, though we can agree with Howard about his narrative gifts, his success in giving the reader a sense of what it felt like to be a pilgrim, and to travel.

It appears when we reach the chapter on Mandeville's *Travels* that the importance of the pilgrim narratives is as back-

ground. Howard's second claim is that the pilgrim writings have "something to reveal about the rise of fiction, of satire, of the novel", and about the context of English literature up to the time of Pound. Here he includes material he has published elsewhere about the form of the *Travels*. He sees the two parts — the "pilgrimage" section and the "oriental voyage" section — as complementary, an arrangement designed to provoke thought about nature, Christian practices, questions of belief in general. The link with the pilgrims lies in the fact that the traveller, in his experience of foreign lands, will reflect on his own, and so the opportunity for irony and satire arises. Howard does not comment on one of the interesting features shared by Mandeville and some of the pilgrims — the nonchalant, teasing attitude toward the reader about credibility. He who wants to believe me, says Mandeville, may do so; he who doesn't, needn't. The pilgrim Ludolph von Suchem's account was written in 1330; he announces "wonders" in his prologue, warning the reader at the same time about his weak memory. Mandeville too has a fallible memory ("things... turn some into forgetfulness"); he visits Rome on his way home and has his book compared with a more inclusive book and thus "proved for true", habitual sceptics notwithstanding.

Pilgrim narratives most often describe only the way to the holy places, though sometimes they end on the way home where the sea-journey ends — Venice or Constantinople. It is the pilgrimage as a one-way journey that interests Howard. Here there is some obfuscation. Howard contrasts the pilgrims proper, who had a

destination — Jerusalem, with the *gyrovagi*, the perpetual exiles, on the one hand, and with the explorers on the other, whose journey ended back at home with the knowledge they had acquired. But pilgrims aimed to come home too, bringing back indulgences, material for preaching, a deeper understanding of the Bible. A pilgrimage is a round trip, and it seems to have been customary to have celebrations, both religious and secular, at least on the return of pilgrims of status. It is only metaphorically that we can think of the Jerusalem pilgrimage as a one-way process. But in the chapter on Chaucer we encounter Howard's third claim, that the pilgrim accounts are useful as analogues of the *Canterbury Tales*. Chaucer begins and ends his work, Howard maintains, with specific references to the Jerusalem pilgrimage. He ignores the fact that the "pilgrims" of the General Prologue, who long "to seeken strange strondes", are not necessarily Jerusalem-bound. "Palmer" could mean simply "pilgrim", as in the Prologue to *Piers Plowman*: "Pilgrimes and palmers plighten hem togidre/For to seeken Saint Jame and seintes at Rome". And when the Parson mentions the Jerusalem pilgrimage at the end of the *Tales*, it is clearly a metaphor.

Zacher has argued persuasively that we should look at Chaucer's pilgrims and their tales in the light of the ideals of pilgrimage which the "frame" of the *Tales* serves to keep in our minds throughout. But Howard's comparisons of the *Canterbury Tales* with the pilgrim narratives are quite unconvincing. They show only the obvious differences. Chaucer's first-person speakers are self-conscious; the other pil-

grims use the first person but reveal little of themselves. Chaucer reports details that, as a character, he could not know; the pilgrims give us what they can remember and what they have heard. In short, Chaucer was writing fiction, the pilgrims non-fiction. Finally, Howard has to abandon his third claim, and to repeat what he has argued at length in *The Idea of the Canterbury Tales*, that the pilgrimage frame has metaphorical significance. He retreats with some dexterity: "We can have it both ways. A real live pilgrimage to any medieval man was a metaphorical one-way journey to the Heavenly Jerusalem, and none the less real for that."

In the last chapter, "Travellers and Readers", Howard's unease about the coherence of his book is increasingly apparent, and he no longer has anything like an argument. The popularity of *The Pilgrim's Progress* in the nineteenth century seems to be adduced as evidence that the idea of the Jerusalem pilgrimage retained its power. In his pursuit of the theme, Howard is as cavalier with facts as the early pilgrims sometimes were. Mythic "Apples of Sodom" growing by the Dead Sea were believed to turn to ashes when picked, and all who went looking for them, even the botanically inclined Fabri, found them. Howard similarly finds what he's looking for. He suggests, for example, that the American West figured to the migrants as the Promised Land, and that they named the Golden Gate "presumably" after the one in Jerusalem through which Jesus had entered the city. The Golden Gate was in fact so named, by the explorer Frémont, because of its shape and advantages for

commerce — as he explains in his *Geographical Memoir*. "Called Chrysopolis (golden gate) on the map, on the same principle that the harbour of Byzantium... was called Chrysoceras (golden horn)."

Ludolph finds room, in his *Description of the Holy Land*, for tales of sea-faced men, and worms bred in apples which turn into birds and fishes. Pilgrimage accounts and those of other kinds of voyage have more in common than Howard appears to allow — for example in Mandeville's coupling of pilgrimage and exploration. And Mandeville's popularity in the fifteenth century is linked with the beginnings of Renaissance exploration and discovery. Less than twenty years before Columbus's third voyage, on which he believed himself to be near the Earthly Paradise, the devout pilgrim Felix Fabri was discovering, once he had left Jerusalem, an attitude to curiosity that was more characteristic of the Renaissance than the Middle Ages. This was stimulated by his observations in the wilderness around Sinai.

All the time something new comes along, which ravishes you with wonder, either at the marvellous structure of the mountain, or at the colour of the ground, the variety of rocks and pebbles... all of which delight the inquisitive.

Howard clearly feels the fascination of his topic of travel, and it is a pity that the attempt to link the pilgrim writings with his previously-published ideas on Chaucer and Mandeville has led to a book which makes indefensible claims and has a spurious theme.

# The mind as water insect

By Rosemary Ashton

KATHLEEN M. WHEELER:  
Sources, Processes and Methods in Coleridge's *Biographia Literaria*  
229pp. Cambridge University Press. £17.50  
£17.50.  
0 521 22690 2

Kathleen Wheeler has written an important and difficult book: important, because it offers a persuasive new approach to *Biographia Literaria*, finding it not only a consistent whole but an example of a new, hybrid genre; difficult, because it subjects some of the most metaphysical (and other) passages of the *Biographia* to a rigorous as well as sympathetic analysis, which requires rigor from the reader too. Thus she quotes Coleridge's illustration of the

thinking process as active rather than Harlequin-passive:

Most of my readers will have observed a small water-insect on the surface of rivulets, which throws a cinque-spotted shadow fringed with prismatic colours on the sunny bottom of the brook; and will have noticed, how the little animal wags its way up against the stream, by alternate pulses of active and passive motion, now resting the current, and now yielding to it in order to gather strength and a momentary fulcrum for a further propulsion. This is no unapt emblem of the mind's self-experience in the act of thinking.

She then turns this observation directly on the thinking process, which 'is (or should be) involved in responding to the *Biographia* itself. Reading Coleridge becomes a process of temporarily tolerating one's inability to apprehend his meaning with the expectation that, as one reads again and

reflects upon them, these passages will eventually reveal an unexpected mode of signifying.

Staunch Coleridgeans like Kathleen Coburn and Thomas McFarland have often insisted that readers who find Coleridge obscure or irritating must presume themselves ignorant of his understanding. Here is a study based on the same outlook. For it is the reader, co-operating correctly, who will discover that the *Biographia* is itself an example of the dynamic principles of knowledge and imagination which it expounds. If Volume One seems to be a discursive, digressive and obscure account of Coleridge's philosophical position, while Volume Two appears to be, separately, about poetry, particularly Wordsworth's, we can supply a reconciliation of the two halves by means of active, intuitive reading:

For the *Biographia* when properly read and fully understood is poetry in prose according to Coleridge's own idea of the

unity of the two disciplines of poetry and philosophy. It is indeed Coleridge's own *Prelude*. It may seem to set out with the immediate object of truth, but it ends in continuous stimulation of delight through metaphorical situations.

The keys to the new reading are irony, understood in the Socratic and German Romantic sense — of a mode of self-consciousness which constitutes an artistic principle — and metaphor. After elucidating the theories of Friedrich Schlegel and Karl Solger, Wheeler comments that the *Biographia* may be seen as belonging to a new genre acting as the model for imaginative literature itself:

Moreover, Coleridge's use of his sources, such as Schelling, Fichte, Kant, Maue, and others, seems to fit into Schlegel's idea that this new work should draw for a new mythology (or resource of ideas, symbols, and images) upon the idealism of, eg. Fichte, Spinoza's thought, and Naturphilosophie. Part of the purpose of the free use of sources would be to challenge the conventional and delusory notion of what constitutes originality, and replace it with a dynamic conception of originality as inhering in the style and metaphysical design of an author, two aspects which alone can express individually.

This is an ingenious approach to the problem of plagiarism, but it remains a matter for the individual reader's taste (or indulgence), since the extension of such structural irony, which may be conscious or unconscious on the part of the author, can only be a matter of the reader's intuition.

The metaphor argument is more thoroughly applied and more generally acceptable. Wheeler regularly picks out passages from the *Biographia* which do illustrate by means of metaphor the argument they are designed to further. For example, Coleridge's warning not to allow language itself "to be used to think for us (like the sliding rule which is the mechanic's sole substitute for arithmetic knowledge)" ought, as Wheeler says, to jolt us out of our "sublimeness to unexamined, unconscious, connections". The reader's mind should proceed like the water-insect, described in the quotation above, and in so doing it will be creatively following the movement of Coleridge's own mind in its process of self-discovery through the act of discovering the nature of knowledge and the imagination. One might quarrel with Wheeler's silence about Coleridge's ungenial criticism of Fichte, as well as her refusal to admit that Coleridge is anywhere in *Biographia Literaria* merely defensive and self-protecting. Her book will make no converts, but will enrich the reading of Coleridgeans.

# The rise of Moscow

By John Fennell

JOHN MEYENDORFF:  
Byzantium and the Rise of Russia  
A study of Byzantine-Russian relations in the fourteenth century  
384pp. Cambridge University Press. £30.  
0 521 23183 3

Why did the insignificant patrimony of Moscow, probably bestowed by Alexander Nevsky on his youngest son Danil as a sort of consolation prize, emerge in the fourteenth century as the leading principality and become the centre of the great Russian centralized State of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries? Many scholars of early Russian history have tried to answer this question and many factors have been adduced. Most historians have settled for Moscow's "superior geographical position" (dubious this: Tver probably had the edge on Moscow, situated as it was on the main trade routes running east and west), the single-mindedness, or perhaps sheer obstinacy, of the descendants of Danil, the unflinching support of the Church for Moscow, the deliberate policy of the Tatar khans in maintaining a balance between Moscow, Tver and Lithuania and the remarkable skill of the princes of Moscow in winning and exploiting Tatar support when necessary. But none have attempted systematically to investigate the role played by the Byzantine empire in the history of north-east Russia in the fourteenth century, none, that is, until John Meyendorff wrote this valuable book.

He states his purpose unequivocally on page one: "To examine the cultural, spiritual and political roots of the events of the fourteenth century which gave Moscow the possibility of rising to the position which it came to occupy for so long", and to study "the role played in this process by the then already moribund Byzantine empire." The contribution of Byzantium to the growth of Moscow, Professor Meyendorff goes on to say, was effected mainly by the ecumenical patriarch's chief agent in Russia, the metropolitan of Kiev and all Russia, who in the early fourteenth century established his residence in Moscow (but surely not "by deliberate choice of the patriarchate and the Byzantine government"? and thus "controlled the only administrative structure which encompassed all of Russia". Much of the book therefore is taken up with the role of the various metropolitans of Kiev in the fourteenth century, their activities as a reflection of the policies of the patriarchs of Constantinople (particularly as regards the changing attitudes of the emperor and the Orthodox Church to the Golden Horde), their constant efforts to thwart the creation of separatist metropolitanates in Galicia and Lithuania, their commitment to the unity of the Orthodox world and their transmission to Russia of Byzantine cultural and spiritual thought.

Two figures emerge clearly as the author's heroes: the great hesychast patriarch of Constantinople, Philotheos Kokkinos, and his friend the Bulgarian metropolitan of Kiev, Cypryan. During his second patriarchate (1364-76), Philotheos, together with the emperor John

Cantacuzenus, consistently promoted the idea of the unity of the Orthodox world and worked, with great skill and diplomacy, for the centralization of administrative control over all Orthodox Russians, whether they be subjects of Byzantium or of Poland. Philotheos, however, takes second place to Cypryan in Meyendorff's hierarchy of values. While Philotheos was the motivator, Cypryan was the man on the spot, the executor of the patriarch's policies. Meyendorff follows Cypryan's remarkable career from his early days as the patriarch's envoy in Russia and from his appointment in 1375 as metropolitan of "Kiev, Russia and Lithuania" (but not of Moscow — Metropolitan Alexis was still alive). During the 1370s he worked untiringly for an anti-Tatar alliance between Moscow, Tver and Lithuania, only to be frustrated in his purpose by the pro-Tatar boyar party in Moscow and by the disastrous vassalage of Dmitry Donskoy, who seemed unable to make up his mind which way to turn. In 1381 he was summoned to Moscow by Dmitry and asked to assume the metropolitanate in Moscow, a reward, perhaps, for having persuaded Jagello of Lithuania not to join Mamai's army at the battle of Kulikovo (1380): such is Meyendorff's plausible explanation of Cypryan's reinstatement.

We are skillfully guided through the labyrinthine story of the struggle for ecclesiastical supremacy in Russia between the various candidates for the various metropolitanates (of "Kiev and all Russia", "Great Russia", "Lithuania and Little Russia") from the death of Alexis (1378) to

Cypryan's ultimate acceptance in Constantinople as *solo* metropolitan of Russia (1389) and his triumphant return to Moscow in 1390, a story which, it seems, could only have unfolded against a background of degrading feuds in Byzantium and bewildering irresolution in Moscow. But in spite of the persistence of his rival Pimen, Cypryan won through in the end and was able for the rest of his tenure of the metropolitanate to work unhindered for the unity of the Orthodox in Russia and Lithuania, to struggle against ecclesiastical and political separatism and to foster the concept of a "supra-national and potentially universal community of Orthodox Christians headed by Constantinople". Of course, as Meyendorff points out in his concluding chapter, Cypryan's hopes for a unified Russia, enshrined in his great common-Russian chronicle compilation (the Trinity Chronicle of 1408), were not fulfilled, as the events of the fifteenth century were to show. But the working towards these hopes is what most of this book is about.

It would be hard to disagree with what Meyendorff says about Russo-Byzantine relations in the fourteenth century. His arguments are always backed up with incontrovertible evidence and he writes with the assurance of the expert that he is. However, in his early chapters on the thirteenth century he seems to be on much less familiar ground. The evidence to support his view that close links existed between north-east Russia and Byzantium before Peter's metropolitanate is extremely slender: what, for example, is there to show

that Metropolitan Cyril kept normal relations with the patriarchate during the 1270s, except that Bishop Theognostos of Saray went to Constantinople in 1276 (in fact, according to the Nikon Chronicle he went there three times)? Did the expansion of Mongol power over Novgorod and south-west Russia result from high-level Tatar-Byzantine diplomatic negotiations in 1256 and 1257? And could the "leadership of the Russian metropolitanate" really have "played a role in exercising pressure upon Byzantium... to turn the empire away from the papal alliance"?

One might also query some of the author's judgments on the Tatar invasion and its aftermath. It is questionable, for example, whether the invasion was "violent and bloody" and resulted in the "destruction of cities and the 'massacre of populations'" — this is a view expressed mainly by late and often unreliable sources — or that the "Mongol conquest was... a national and cultural disaster for Russia, a political humiliation for its princes and an economic catastrophe for the whole population".

But still, this is not a book about Russia in the thirteenth century; it is about the rise of Moscow and the role of the Byzantine empire in this process. There are few people better qualified to tackle this vast, difficult and intricate subject than Professor Meyendorff. It requires a scholar with a profound knowledge of both Russia and Byzantium, a specialist in ecclesiastical history as well as a theologian, and Professor Meyendorff is all of those.

# The plain Anglo-Saxon truth

By T. A. Shippey

DOROTHY WHITLOCK:  
From Bede to Alfred  
Studies in Early Anglo-Saxon Literature and History  
368pp. Variorum Reprints. £22.  
0 86078 066 X

JOHN D. NILES (Editor):  
Old English Literature in Context  
Ten Essays  
184pp. D. S. Brewer. £15.  
0 85991 061 X

Dorothy Whitlock's *From Bede to Alfred* consists of reprints of one short book, *The Audience of Beowulf* (1951), and of a dozen articles first published between 1959 and 1977. Having a scholar's career presented all at once in this way makes it suddenly easy to spot its *leitmotifs*, the dominating interest which led Professor Whitlock to research the things she did. It is, in a phrase, "the truth of literature, not emotional truth, or metaphysical truth, or truth to humane values, or any other of the glosses which have been put on that phrase, but plain literal truth. Anglo-Saxon writers, even poets, even poets writing about dragons, in Professor Whitlock's view dealt with what they knew, or at least with what they thought they knew. Certainly their opinions on ethics or behaviour often seem hard to accept, but for that difference there are historical reasons. Though one of the pieces here reprinted explains how useful Old English verse can be to the historian, more often the debt has been the other way: Professor Whitlock has pressed history into the service of the critic.

To give a few examples, the earliest article in this volume explains why the *Beowulf* poet moved on from a dead Swedish prince, that accidentally by his brother, to an old man who sees his son hanged; the connection was that in both cases vengeance would have been illegal or unthinkable in Anglo-Saxon England. Clearly, then, revenge was on the poet's mind. As clearly, views that the poet found, revenge repugnant and violence morally reprehensible have a major obstacle in their path: the thought he seems to have found really helpful was passivity.

Elsewhere, indeed, in *The Audience of Beowulf* Whitlock notes the pious Thanes' Guild of Cambridge, quietly agreeing to support each other's obsequies; manifestly, if done as an avenger by necessity, and to remedy evil, like other scholars of the period, Whitlock seems to have found almost a wealth in the Anglo-Saxon institutionalization of passion, the justification of ferocity and sobriety.

John Godfrey's account of the crusade is an excellent, accurate and workmanlike narrative. It follows closely (sometimes too closely) the two great chronicles of the war

good faith. Nevertheless, telling points are made here about translation, about what a real propagandist would have said, and — characteristically — about the sidelights of oral tradition as preserved in the later lives of St. Cuthbert and St. Neot. Professor Whitlock's greatest resource as a scholar, perhaps, is that she has read all the material, literary or historical, Latin or vernacular, without holding herself bound to the loyalty of a single discipline.

The contrast with the ten essays (all but one by an American scholar) in *Old English Literature in Context* is extreme. No one, least of all Dorothy Whitlock, would venture to say that looking at the contexts of any ancient literature is wrong. However, one might think that merely invoking "context" as a ritual ploy does little good, and can on occasion obscure real problems of "text". So it often proves in this collection. Fred C. Robinson of Yale, for instance, ends his essay with the remark that "interpreters of Old English literature would be prudent when they consider the various contexts of a poem not to neglect its position and appearance within the manuscript in which it is preserved". They would indeed,

and usually they are, but the fact remains that in most cases the manuscript context simply does not reveal what one would like to know. Professor Robinson has already shown that one ten-line poem was a colophon, part of a triple coda, feignedly spoken by Bede, and appealing for royal support; also that it is extremely dull. When one steps from this clear but insignificant case to the much more interesting poem *Maxims II*, does it help to know that this is sandwiched between the *Menologium* and the *Chronicle*? Several scholars 'have thought so. Still, observing that all three works begin and end in Christ is just just true.

The *Menologium* ends with Christmas, since that happens to be the last major festival of the calendar year. The last lines of *Maxims II* say that only God knows what happens after death, since it is sure that from that bourn no traveller returns. Are these thoughts similar, or just close together?

Debating points are scored evenly throughout this volume. John D. Niles even makes a virtue of the fact that his con-

tributors show not the slightest trace of agreement over (for example) whether *Beowulf* was written or sung, clerical, secular, allegorical or mythical; these ten responses "should provide an efficient rebuttal to anyone who would claim that the question of contextuality in Old English literature has a simple answer". If one needed such a rebuttal, the volume would indeed come in handy; but it seems unlikely. What one does need is some sense from the typologists that words can mean what they say, and a corresponding undertaking from mythicizers not to reduce all life to patterns and polarities.

It must be said that one article here hits its mark. In Thomas D. Hill's indication that the poem *Eoðulf* has a recurrent image in it of the scourge, or rather the cane of God; the rod of Moses was *virga* or *ferrule*, no doubt an object familiar enough in monastic schoolrooms. Elsewhere, though, the reflection rather forced on one is that modern literary scholars take a narrow view of the *scoria* life, the "life of nobles", and an even narrower one of religious experience, too often equated with an almost Unitarian blandness.

# Epic and egomania

By Stanley Wells

RICHARD S. IDE:  
Famous and Greatness  
The Heroic Tragedies of Chapman and Shakespeare  
258pp. Scolar Press. £12.50.  
0 85967 619 6

In 1598, George Chapman published his version of the first seven books of the *Iliad*, which undoubtedly influenced Shakespeare in his play directly, concerned with the Trojan War, *Troilus and Cressida*, composed no later than 1603. In the years that followed, Chapman and Shakespeare between them "wrote five unguessed as a soldier as protagonist", Richard S. Ide points out. The plays and their appropriate dates are Shakespeare's *Orlando* (1604), Chapman's *Antony and Cleopatra* (1607), Chapman's *Tragedy of Byron* (1608), in two parts, which provoked a political scandal and survives in a text mutilated by censorship, and Shakespeare's *Coriolanus* (1609). Did Ide really have good reasons for excluding *Macbeth*, but he does not explain them.

His initial thesis is that these plays exemplify a contention advanced by A. C. Bradley, that in the small, closed, controlled world of the Elizabethan playwrights, the

evolution of dramatic form took the shape of a dialogue among plays. Writers reacted intensely to one another's work, and in a variety of ways.

In the absence of external evidence this notion, though perfectly plausible, is inherently unprovable. As an element in the biography of either Shakespeare or Chapman it would probably not loom large. Its interest lies rather in what the critic can make of it: whether, that is to say, our perception that the plays represent alternating voices in a dialogue adds to our understanding either of them or of their creators' imaginations.

Wisely, Ide addresses himself primarily to these questions. His speculations about influence and counter-influence are modestly stated: "It is easy enough to agree, at least, that Shakespeare must have been aware of the notorious Byron plays, and the thought that he may have designed *Coriolanus* as a response not only to them but also to Chapman's theory of heroic tragedy" is stimulating to our concept of Shakespeare's creative processes. It suggests that his perception of the ideas which he could draw from a story may have been strongly, perhaps dominantly, influenced in his decision to base a play upon it. Even if this does not add directly to our understanding of *Coriolanus*, it may nevertheless encourage an interpretation of the play which gives some prominence to ideas that can be traced behind it, as well as to the small, closed, controlled world of the Elizabethan playwrights, the

Ide opens with a discussion of Chapman's interpretative emphases and adaptations in his translation of Homer, particularly in connection with his ethical and moral defence of Achilles, relating this to the dedication of the work of the Earl of Essex as "the contemporary exemplar of Achillesian virtue". Chapman he thinks "considered himself not so much a celebrator of the past as a visionary interpreter of the present, a contemporary seer who could discern the manifestations of human excellence that would otherwise be hidden from his blind and decadent age". This, he suggests, explains why Chapman wrote of recent historical figures. Perhaps so; yet Shakespeare, conducting his side of the debate (if debate it was) through a portrayal of ancient history, succeeded conspicuously in relating it to living issues.

Although the author's main concern is with tragedies, his moves from Chapman's Homer first to the generically indeterminate *Troilus and Cressida*, dissociating himself from views of it as a projection of Shakespeare's "heroic fantasy quest for absolute standards of value and, hence, the wreckage of his own civilization", and regarding it, rather as a criticism of "the heroic psychology" to find absolute value in the "physicality and illusory idealism of love and war". The poem and the play anticipate the distinctions that the author draws between Chapman's and Shakespeare's tragedies, Chapman glorifying "the heroic passion for honor and individual excellence", Shakespeare's "defeating the pretensions to honor

and excellence that glid a destructive egomania".

Having established his basic premises, Ide enters upon a comparative discussion which stresses the counter-claims of epically conceived characters and tragic form, the conflict between martial and social values, and the strong psychological emphases in the portrayal of central characters. He writes with confident scholarship in a thoughtful style marred by occasional lapses into jargon: we hear too much for my liking of "normative standards", "existential values", the "social consensus", and attempts to "unmetaphor" this and that. But he says much that is illuminating about the work of both dramatists. Though he is aware of Chapman's deficiencies, he responds to him with sympathetic understanding of his techniques, writing with proper respect of his resolute grappling with intractable issues, and of the poetry, all the more eloquent for being hard won, which derives from it. If Shakespeare emerges not only as the more consummate dramatist but also as the artist more able to transmute complex ideas into compelling, compelling action, and as the greater humanist, this will surprise few readers. In each of his comparative studies, Ide finds that the differences between the dramatists' attitudes remain fundamental throughout. Chapman's heroes aim at transcendence of human nature, at "true heroism and true, heroic, self-pleasing, in the humanization of the hero and in an allegiance to the values of the heart".

# Settling for Byzantium

By Jonathan Sumption

JOHN GODFREY:  
1204: The Unholy Crusade  
184pp. Oxford University Press. £12.50.  
0 19 215834 1

*Gesta Dei per Francos* is the title of one of the earliest chronicles of the First Crusade: "The Deeds of God (performed by the French)". And indeed the early crusades were carried out with a degree of verve and courage which gave substance to the boast.

It was otherwise with the Fourth Crusade, which gradually transformed itself into a war against the Christians of Byzantium. Although the deed was unquestionably performed by the French, there were not many contemporaries who regarded it as God's, and it marked the turning-point at which European enthusiasm for the conquest of the Holy Land turned to benevolent apathy and thence to muted hostility.

John Godfrey's account of the crusade is an excellent, accurate and workmanlike narrative. It follows closely (sometimes too closely) the two great chronicles of the war

those of Villehardouin and Robert of Clari, both of whom were participants, but also partisans and apologists for a cause which seemed friends. Mr Godfrey is not a friend of their cause, but he eschews the overt indignation which colours most earlier histories, notably those written by Hellenic crusaders' third choice, adopted after considerable argument and after better men had declined. Shortly after his election he spent Christmas with the German Emperor Philip of Swabia whose brother-in-law was the exiled Byzantine Prince Alexis. It now seems clear that it was in the course of this winter that Boniface, together with Philip, concocted the plan to install Prince Alexis on the Byzantine throne, which was the root of all that followed. Alexis's enthusiasm for the plan can readily be understood. What has always remained a mystery and still does is why Boniface should have lent himself to it.

The evidence for a Venetian plot has never been very satisfactory, being based chiefly on the ultimate outcome, which was an enormous increase of the wealth, power and self-satisfaction of Venice. But *post hoc* is not *propter hoc*. The Venetians exploited the situation as it developed, but the real culprit was almost certainly Boniface of Monferrat, the military commander of the crusade. He, as things turned out, gained nothing.

Sinister motives readily come to mind, but political misjudgment is a better explanation as well as a more charitable one. The second and last crusades had been heroic failures. Direct attacks on Palestine had not worked because occasional lurches from the west could not inflict permanent defeat on the settled Muslim societies of the Middle East, least of all in the atmosphere of Islamic fervour which prevailed there in the

late twelfth century. There were many who felt that an indirect approach was better; to beard the lion in his den by conquering Egypt or else take over the wealth and power of Byzantium. Boniface was probably a sincere if misguided adherent of this latter view, and like most westerners, he believed this Byzantine state to have far greater resources than it enjoyed in fact. Alexis no doubt encouraged this view.

When the plan to sail to Constantinople was revealed, to the mass of crusaders at Corfu in May 1203, some of them indignantly departed to fulfil their vows in Syria. But what made the crusade unholy in their eyes was not greed and wickedness. It was the fact that the crusaders thought of themselves as pilgrims, and a visit to Constantinople did not carry the spiritual associations of a visit to the Lord's sepulchre. The indirect route to Jerusalem might have been good or bad strategy for all they cared.

Sinistry was not the prime consideration, a fact which Boniface had the misfortune to overlook. The result was a campaign which posterity has viewed with obloquy and contempt although it ended in a considerable military triumph. Only twice, in a millennium and a half have the walls of Constantinople fallen to an invader.



# For God and Mammon

By Roger Mason

GORDON MARSHALL:  
Presbyteries and Profits  
Calvinism and the Development of Capitalism in Scotland, 1560-1707  
406pp. Clarendon Press: Oxford University Press. £18.  
0 19 827346 4

Ever since the publication in 1904-5 of *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, Scotland has figured prominently in discussions of the validity of Max Weber's provocative thesis. For the most part, however, this participation has been negative: sociologists and historians alike have construed the coincidence in seventeenth-century Scotland of a Calvinist state church and an underdeveloped economy as a telling indictment of Weber's causal relationship between Calvinism and the growth of capitalism. Nevertheless, his thesis has stubbornly refused to die and Gordon Marshall's study, as its title hints, is a further contribution to the debate on its tenability. Remarkably, indeed, it is the first serious attempt to test the validity of the thesis through an empirical investigation of Scottish experience from the Reformation to the Parliamentary Union. Still more remarkably, unlike the majority of previous commentators, Marshall is inclined to conclude - albeit cautiously - that Scotland may yet prove Weber right.

This revisionist stance is based on a convincing re-interpretation of the Weber thesis itself. With considerable justification, Marshall argues that those who espouse the "refutation" - from Scottish-experience argument merely expose their astonishing ignorance of what Weber actually wrote. For to impute to him the suggestion that Calvinism inevitably "caused" or "gave birth to" capitalism is unconsciously to telescope and travesty a much richer and more complex theory. More specifically, it is to conflate the *spirit* of capitalism with the *capitalist economic system* - a conflation that even a cursory reading of his works will reveal Weber to be at pains to avoid. Indeed, Marshall contends, it obscures the crucial fact that Weber actually developed two theses in response to two problems. The first, resolved in *The Protestant Ethic*, was to locate the source of the modern *spirit* of capitalism and led him to advance the thesis that it originated in the social ethic of seventeenth-century neo-Calvinism. In the course of this investigation, however, and in his subsequent writings, Weber confronted a second and quite separate problem in defining the precise role of this capitalist *spirit* in the development of the modern capitalist *economic system*. Consequently, and in response to historical materialists' (mis-)interpretation of his initial thesis as idealist, he advanced the further thesis that the *spirit* of capitalism was only one of a range of material and non-material factors responsible for the development of the modern capitalist economic system.

Weber is certainly not unambiguous, but this is a credible and illuminating interpretation of his thought which Marshall proceeds to test and illustrate in the light of available Scottish data. He begins with the Protestant ethic as it developed in Scotland after 1560, and, through a detailed exposition of the formal and pastoral theology of Scottish divines, demonstrates their subscription to the same tenets that Weber identified as crucial to seventeenth-century English Puritanism and the fostering of the capitalist *spirit*. That is, they preached the "double injunction" to labour diligently in one's calling and to adopt a life-style characterized by "this-worldly asceticism". Moreover, like the English Puritans, preachers such as Robert Rollock, David Dickson and James Durham reinforced this special ethic with the "psychological sanction" (unique to Calvinism) implicit in the doctrine of predestination. Weber argued (and Marshall's analysis supports the contention) that this sanction first social activity with a compelling urgency, through the neo-Calvinists' insistence that while faith was the sole true sign of salvation, man could never be entirely confident of his election and must therefore strive ceaselessly for "proof" through works. It is, through constant industry in one's calling combined with strict conformity to an ascetic code of conduct, indeed, not to be seen as striving, argued the neo-Calvinist divines, was a simple but conclusive indication of faithfulness and therefore of everlasting salvation.

Given from this dynamic configuration of ideas that Weber believed the capitalist *spirit* to have developed. For given an ideology that insisted on productive activity but forbade conspicuous consumption, capital inevitably accumulated and could only be employed - in an ever-recurring cycle - in still further productive activity. Weber, of course, was careful to insist that this phenomenon was an "unintended" and "even unwished-for" consequence of the Protestant ethic and that capitalism was not directly promoted by neo-Calvinist preachers. Marshall, however, goes somewhat further and provides good evidence that some Scottish divines were prepared explicitly to encourage the accumulation (but not the abuse) of capital, thus granting "the Calvinist businessman a fabulously clear conscience as far as the honest-but-incessant - pursuit of capital as an end in itself was concerned". The first part of Weber's initial thesis, therefore, is not only vindicated but made to look still more convincing.

But how effective was preaching such as this in fostering the modern capitalist *spirit* in Scotland? Did the attitudes and behavioural patterns of seventeenth-century Scottish businessmen actually change in the way that Weber's thesis indicates they ought to have done? Neither of these questions, as Marshall is the first to recognize, admits of an easy answer. Not only is the evidence scanty, but it has to be interpreted extremely cautiously. For example, while it is possible to uncover the existence of capitalist enterprises in Scotland, it by no means follows that they were imbued with the *spirit* of capitalism. As Weber himself admitted, the *form* of an economic organization is no sure indication of its *ethos* and it is possible to conceive of a capitalist enterprise operated on "traditionalist" assumptions (i.e. for the satisfaction of limited personal desires) as well as of a traditionalist business imbued with the modern capitalist *spirit* (i.e. for the pursuit of continuously accruing, limitless profits). It is, of course, with the ethos, not the form, that Marshall is concerned, and, given the extreme limitations of the available data, he makes a most unsuccessful attempt at uncovering it in seventeenth-century Scotland.

Although trading ventures (the Darien Scheme), the foundation of the Bank of Scotland, and the coal-mining industry, all pass under brief review, the burden of Marshall's proof of its existence rests on his analysis of the records of the Newmills Cloth Manufactory between 1645 and 1713. Through these unusually full records, he is able to document that the partners in the business were, indeed, intent on maximizing profitability and employed all the techniques of management associated with the modern *spirit* of capitalism. That is, they maintained strict control over operations at

the factory, expanded and contracted production lines according to market demands, organized capital and labour in a rational and calculating manner and, above all, did so in order to ensure for themselves a "continuous, ever-increasing, systematically generated, but legitimately earned profit". Whether Newmills can be considered "a representative case-study" may be open to question, but it is hard to deny Marshall's further contention that "the ethos that informed the enterprise (at least on the entrepreneurial side) was truly that of modern Western capitalism". Of his important reservation concerning the non-entrepreneurial side - the labour-force - I shall speak shortly.

But even if we concede that the modern capitalist *spirit* was an operative business ethic in seventeenth-century Scotland, is its contemporaneity and congruency with the Protestant ethic sufficient grounds for positing (as Weber did) a conceptual and, indeed, causal link between them? Quite correctly, Marshall thinks not. Consequently, his next task is to bridge the conceptual divide with solid empirical data. Once again, this is no easy task and Marshall's evidence is far less extensive than either he or his readers would wish. Nevertheless, from records left by certain capitalists of the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries - Henry Fletcher, Francis Masterson and James Donaldson - he is able tentatively to suggest the confluence of the Protestant and capitalist ethics in their everyday business practices and in their attitude to the use of both capital and labour.

Much more conclusively, however, the extensive papers of Sir John Clerk of Pentlands (1649-1722) relating to his Loanhead colliery provide a telling example of how the Protestant ethic combined with and underwrote the *spirit* of capitalism. Sir John's Calvinism is not to be doubted - between 1692 and 1722 his notebooks record no less than one hundred and nine covenants drawn up by himself with God - but neither is his capitalism. The Loanhead colliery was demonstrably organized and run with a keen eye for the efficient utilization of labour and capital to ensure continued and increasing profitability. This *spirit* of capitalism, moreover, was indubitably strengthened by Sir John's religious convictions, and his honest business practices, his concern for the moral and spiritual well-being of his work-force and, above all, his fascinating contracts with such employees as his griever, Thomas Miller, amply justify Marshall's conclusion that he had worked out a "distinctive formula for the systematic generation of profit and regeneration of man." If the evidence is far from over-

whelming, there are at least some empirical grounds for making the conceptual leap that is essential for the vindication of Weber's thesis. But what of the crucial question of causation? Was Sir John's capitalist enterprise motivated by the Protestant ethic or was the latter merely adopted *ex post facto* (as Weber's Marxian critics might argue) as a convenient means of legitimating his economic interests? Wisely, in a study of this kind, Marshall does not wish to enter into the controversy over Weber's ambiguous attitude to historical materialism. Nevertheless, to vindicate Weber, he does have to establish whether the Protestant ethic was or was not "epiphenomenal" to the growth of capitalism and the capitalist *spirit*. At this point, however, aside from one consideration of chronology, his empirical approach falls him entirely and Marshall is forced to concede that from the available data it is impossible to assign causal priority to either of the belief-systems with which he is dealing. Accordingly, therefore, to prove Weber correct, he has recourse to "considerations of general sociological theory". Unfortunately, it is not within the scope of this review (nor entirely within the reviewer's competence) to deal critically with Marshall's subsequent (and all too brief) argument. Suffice it to say that he seeks to refute what he believes to be the crudely mechanistic model of social action advanced by Marxians by arguing that their arbitrary separation of "legitimation" and "motivation" does not conform with the realities of everyday social behaviour. On the contrary, he asserts, the beliefs and ideology of a social actor have a *causal* as well as a legitimating significance. For those exposed to it, therefore, the Protestant ethic will have provided "a vocabulary of motives" which gave *prior* (and quite unprecedented) justification and encouragement to the pursuit of profit as an end in itself. In other words, Marshall rather bluntly concludes, "the Calvinist ethic caused the development of the *spirit* of modern capitalism".

Of itself, however, it did not - as the case of Scotland amply demonstrates - cause the development of the modern capitalist economic system. In demonstrating the existence of the modern *spirit* of capitalism in seventeenth-century Scotland, therefore, Marshall has already gone far towards establishing the significance of his reinterpretation of Weber's two theses. For, quite clearly, the operation of such an ethos could not overcome the material and other disadvantages under which Scotland laboured and which Marshall briefly reviews in his final chapter. After the Union of the Parliaments, for example, when no longer

former, and if James had been succeeded by a man of sense, Scotland might have remained a pretty contented episcopally-presbyterian country, such as James left it. James's rule by the pen was an undoubted fact, but whose hand guided the pen? This is where Lee's book, by its attention to detail, is most valuable. We do not have much indication of how much influence his London advisers had on his general policy as distinct from private interests; probably rather little except on church matters. But the Privy Council at Edinburgh, through whom he acted, was no mere tool. Its members suggested, they modified, they dragged their feet, they advised, they refrained. The time came when, except on those religious matters which were closest to the king's heart - much of the initiative originated with them. James had picked good men; they were loyal to him and he trusted them; he kept them long in office - in the case of Dunbar and Dunfermline, the dominant men of the period, till their deaths. They were able, experienced, and by the standards of those times, incorrupt. It was not surprising that in 1616 one of the king's London advisers, writing about a forthcoming visit from Edinburgh, said "Conditions settled by yourselves before he came to the king will make his Majesty the better contented. You know how much it troubles him when matters are in question."

Lee still wonders that it was possible to achieve so much so long a distance; but it seems probable that, given peace and competent representatives in Edinburgh, the king's absence was a positive advantage. James was always too easily influenced by love, fear, suspicion and horror. When he was in Scotland he could act directly, all or often under the influence of his favourites, or of the emotion of a moment. Take one example which Lee does not mention. He refers to James's "exasperated decision", just before he left for England, to expunge the name and clan of MacGregor. He does not say that this followed the prosecution of the bloody sarks, organized in front of the king by the enemies of the MacGregors, who knew that they could rely on his honor of blood to drive him past reason. They could never have mounted this show in London.

Once James was in London, his decisions were filtered through the Council and, as Lee shows, often sensibly modified. It helped that communications were slow; urgency faded and useful prevarication became possible. Not only James was in London: such magnates as Argyll and Huntly were often there too, on the make but not on their own behalf, so that their influence was lessened. Even if James had been in Scotland, strong-arm tactics were probably well out of date; in London, they would have been inconceivable. Favourites such as Carr might come from Scotland and might still be a burden on Scottish Exchequer, but their eyes were on England. Scotland became a partly self-running machine, and the story of the artifice of Perth after James's only visit to Scotland after 1603 is not a bad example of how to deal with divine right at a distance.

## Divine right from a distance

By Edward Playfair

MAURICE LEE JR:  
Government by Pen  
Scotland under James VI & I  
232pp. University of Illinois Press. £9.00.  
0 252 0076 4

This I must say for Scotland, and I may truly vaunt it, here I sit and govern it with my pen, I write and it is done, and by a Clerk of the Council I govern Scotland now, which others could not do by the sword.

So said King James (in 1607), one of the most ludicrous kings of England, but the most successful king of Scotland before the Union. He brought that country out of savagery and led into comparative civilization and peace, and the best of his work on its behalf was done from London. Some aspects of Scottish history from 1603 to his death in 1625, particularly the religious ones, have been studied in detail; but, amazingly, no full political history has been written before. We owe a debt to Maurice Lee Jr. for filling the gap so competently.

Before he left Scotland, James had managed to gain some control over the great landed families and to limit new feuds. The Union of the Crowns made a tough policy possible in the Borders; and, by political accommodation as well as occasional letters of fire and sword to rebellious clans, James began to solve the Highland prob-

lem. Internal peace left him free to follow the policies closest to his heart: the union of the Kingdoms, the restoration of episcopacy and religious unity which in his mind meant the assimilation of the Church of Scotland to the Church of England. The three policies were interconnected, but tactically they could be separately pursued.

The union of the kingdoms was instantly rejected by opinion in both countries; James retained it as an ideal, but accepted that it was premature. Episcopacy was firmly re-established. His attempt to unify religion was his one overt failure. The King insisted on the five articles of Perth. Lee shows that his episcopal and lay advisers did not warn him how much opposition there would be to them and concludes (not to my mind convincingly) that if James had been better informed, he would not have insisted. Anyway, he did insist and met with resistance. A packed and bullied General Assembly approved the articles second line round; Parliament did so without difficulty; and no one obeyed them. The resistance greatly angered James; but, unlike his son, he recognized what could and what could not be done and bided his time; though the infatuation of the Churches was not achieved during his lifetime.

Lee supports W. R. Porter in the view that the principal outcome of the squabble over the articles was the creation of a permanent, nonconformist party, which rejected automatic obedience to the crown. But, had it not been for the distaste of Charles I, would that party have been permanent? Time is a great con-

former, and if James had been succeeded by a man of sense, Scotland might have remained a pretty contented episcopally-presbyterian country, such as James left it.

James's rule by the pen was an undoubted fact, but whose hand guided the pen? This is where Lee's book, by its attention to detail, is most valuable. We do not have much indication of how much influence his London advisers had on his general policy as distinct from private interests; probably rather little except on church matters. But the Privy Council at Edinburgh, through whom he acted, was no mere tool. Its members suggested, they modified, they dragged their feet, they advised, they refrained. The time came when, except on those religious matters which were closest to the king's heart - much of the initiative originated with them. James had picked good men; they were loyal to him and he trusted them; he kept them long in office - in the case of Dunbar and Dunfermline, the dominant men of the period, till their deaths. They were able, experienced, and by the standards of those times, incorrupt. It was not surprising that in 1616 one of the king's London advisers, writing about a forthcoming visit from Edinburgh, said "Conditions settled by yourselves before he came to the king will make his Majesty the better contented. You know how much it troubles him when matters are in question."

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CHARLES LYTE:  
Sir Joseph Banks: 18th Century Explorer,  
Botanist and Entrepreneur  
248pp. David and Charles. £10.50.  
0 7153 7884 8

The lifelong and consuming interests of Joseph Banks (1744-1820) were fixed in one revelatory moment after a schoolboy swim in the river at Eton. Wandering back along the lane he decided that the plants in flower around him would prove a higher object of study than Latin and Greek; and so, with a characteristic and highly efficient combination of single-minded enthusiasm, excessive but directed expenditure and tough organizing ability, he persuaded the local women who collected herbs for apothecaries to bring their best specimens to him instead and, for a fee of sixpence a time, to tell him all they knew about each one.

The same vigorous technique prevailed at Christ Church. Faced with Dr Humphrey Sibthorp set fast in the Chair of Botany, Banks had delivered one lecture in thirty-five years - and who made it plain that a mere pupil who wished to learn was insufficient cause to effect a change in the habits of a lifetime - Banks hired his own lecturer in Cambridge and brought him to Oxford.

In 1764 he inherited the family seat of Revesby Abbey, great Lincolnshire estates, and a further fortune in early industrial investments. Under the tutelage of a mother he described as "void of all imaginary fears" and whom he adored, he brought his habits of ordered, documented control to his land and business empire, and still found time to botanize, to correspond with the leading naturalists of his day, notably Thomas Pennant, and, with Lord Sandwich, to lay secret plans for the draining of the Serpentine to discover what fish it might contain.

In April 1766, at twenty-three, he was nominated to the Royal Society, and that same month set out on the first stage of a world tour, with an expedition to Labrador and Newfoundland. Like Charles Darwin and his companions, Banks lived among and with the natives (drawing the line only at rotting jellyfish). He had his arm discreetly tattooed and, an unheard-of honour, he was allowed to take part, as a Neneva, a demonic clown, in a spirits-of-the-dead ceremony.

After Tahiti, Cook swung south-west in search of the hypothetical last continent. Two months out from the Society Islands, he and his companions landed in New Zealand. They found the Maoris to be cannibals and invariably hostile, but to speak a language which Tupia, a Tahitian Chief who wished to see London and had been taken on board, could understand. He comforted the ship's company with a ready translation of the standard welcome call, "Haere mai ki uta ki tatou"; "come ashore and be clubbed".

The Admiralty magnanimously let Banks finance his own contribution to the success of the secret venture it really had in mind. This was the discovery and possession of the "Continental or Land of Great extent", which it was thought must exist in the South Pacific Ocean in order to counterbalance the weight of the land masses spread across the Northern hemisphere. And in perhaps the nearest approach to administrative genius ever made by a committee, it rejected the Royal Society's nominee to command the expedition and chose instead a man entirely unknown outside naval circles, a thirty-nine-year-old son of a Yorkshire farmhand who had come up through the ranks, James Cook.

Cook's reputation was based on his successful navigation of the intricate waters of the St Lawrence to take the forces of General James Wolfe to the storming of Quebec. He had also made a painstaking survey of the coasts of Newfoundland (his charts were not superseded for almost a century). His formative years were spent as a merchant seaman in the North Sea and Scandinavian waters, and when offered a free trip to all the ships in the navy for the Wherry Collier, he asked instead for a vessel, with its shallow draught and flat bottom, which would enable it to scrape across uncharted reefs and then be pulled safely ashore for repairs. Banks committed

himself, seven colleagues, two servants and, as assistant zoological collectors, two greyhounds. On the cramped voyage out, he fretted, found five varieties of weevil in his ship's biscuit and observed that some preyed on the eggs of the others; and he wrote his Journal.

As Bacon wrote in his essay "Of Travel", "It is a strange thing that in sea-voyages, where there is nothing to be seen but sky and sea, men should make diaries, but in land-travel wherein so much is to be observed, for the most part they omit it". The lavish use of Banks's Journal is this biography's greatest strength. Via the South Atlantic coast of South America, Tierra del Fuego and Cape Horn, and with a botanical collection growing faster and filling with more new species than Banks had dared to imagine, the Endeavour reached Tahiti on April 13, 1769. The island looked like the mythical home of the Noble Savage: azure waters, palms, rich woods, tall hills, coconuts, breadfruit and fish for the taking, and, as Banks noted,

The ladies... showed us all kinds of civilities our situation could admit of, but as there were no places of retirement, the houses being entirely without walls, we had not an opportunity of putting their politeness to every test... Indeed we had no reason to doubt any part of their politeness by their frequently pointing to the mats on the ground and sometimes by force seating themselves and us upon them they plainly showed that they were much less jealous of observation than we were.

Banks, pursued by the "chief's own wife (ugly enough in conscience)" then "espied among the common crowd a very pretty girl with a fire in her eyes that I had not seen before in the country. Unconscious of the dignity of my companion I beckoned to the other and 'loaded my pretty girl with beads and every present I could think pleasing to her'".

As well as building up a magnificent botanical collection on Tahiti, dried, appropriately enough, between proof sheets of Joseph Addison's commentary on *Paradise Lost*, Banks contributed much to early anthropology. He lived among and with the natives (drawing the line only at rotting jellyfish). He had his arm discreetly tattooed and, an unheard-of honour, he was allowed to take part, as a Neneva, a demonic clown, in a spirits-of-the-dead ceremony.

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Circumnavigating both North and South Island, and proving that New Zealand could not be part of the Southern Continent, took five months. Then Cook decided to return

## Naval review

By Bryan Ranft

GRANT UDEN and RICHARD COOPER:  
A Dictionary of British Ships and Seamen  
591 pp. Allen Lane. £15.  
0 7226 5242 9

Her Majesty's Inspectors of Schools are not often thought of in connection with the sea, but Grant Uden and Richard Cooper are noteworthy exceptions. For six years, in co-operation with the Royal Naval College Greenwich and the National Maritime Museum, they ran at Greenwich a series of successful courses for teachers on maritime history. It was presumably the response to these and an awareness of the increasing interest in Britain's maritime heritage which led them to produce this admirable reference book.

Dictionary is too cold a term to describe so lively and companionable a work. It deals with ships, from the galley to the nuclear submarine, nautical terms and slang, and information on the sea and weather, as well

home via the East Indies, striking westwards across the Tasman Sea. This route brought the Endeavour in April 1770 to the south-east coast of Australia, which Cook named New South Wales. The natives gathered along the shoreline, "appeared through our glasses to be enormously black", and Tupia found their dissonant language meaningless. So Cook sailed north, making a detailed survey of the east coast of this new land, successfully navigating the most treacherous stretch of sea in the world. His instinctive seamanship, his ability to "smell land" so that (as one of his co-travellers wrote) "when no one else had a suspicion of danger he often came up on deck and changed the course of the ship because land was near... and he was always right", held good until June 11. Then, in this new nature, with its passages of clear water so much more twisted, its rocks more jagged, the plumb line that probed it registering a fathomless deep at one cast and no room the next, so unlike the switchways amongst the inshore banks and shoals of the North Sea, the Endeavour struck.

Banks wrote, "She... continued to beat very much so that we could hardly keep our legs upon the quarter deck; by the light of the moon we could see her sheering boards etc., floating thick round her; about twelve her false keel came away." Twenty-four miles from the shore with no islands nearby, "the seamen worked with surprising cheerfulness and alacrity" laying anchors to haul the ship off, jettisoning water and ballast and the six heavy guns. For the very first time on the voyage Banks recorded, "no grumbling or growling was to be heard throughout the ship, no not even an oath". He himself "entirely gave up the ship and packing up what I might save, prepared myself for the worst." He details a line of imagined fates of increasing horror: drowning; reaching the shore and starving; reaching the shore and being eaten; or, worst of all, being condemned to suffer the poor conversation of uncivilized savages for the rest of his life.

In fact, Cook's foresight in the choice of ship and his use of the little-used technique of lathering, in which a piece of sailcloth studded with fish-sized bundles of wool and oakum - was lowered, over the side and formed a seal over the leak by suction, saved them. But, loudly though he protested to the contrary, it is plain that Banks decided from then on never to take such risks again. Determined to take part in a second voyage to fathom if Terra Australis existed - the expedition on which Cook reached Antarctica, discovered Easter Island, and became the first man to sail round the world from west to east - Banks insisted on raising the deck of the chosen Whitty collier to such a height that it proved impossible to go to sea, and then refused to join an expedition in a ship that was unworthy. His correspondence about all this with the Navy Board, and with his poor old friend Lord Sandwich, is conducted in a tell-tale tone of high-church outrage.

Still, great field-collector and naturalist though he was, Banks was probably more use at home in Soho Square, as a figure-head of English science for nearly

half a century. He was an honorary director of Kew Gardens, and a one-man collecting and clearing house for plants and seeds from his own team of loyal collectors: Francis Mason, travelling in Southern Africa as far north as the Karroo, in North America, Spain, the Canaries, the Azores and the West Indies introduced hundreds of new species - heaths, pteridophytes, mesembryanthemums, lobellias, oaks, Arctostaphylos, a naval surgeon commissioned by Banks, brought back young plants of the Giant Redwood and the Monkey Puzzle tree. John Lettyard was sent to Russia; William Hooker went to Iceland but politely declined to go to Java, blaming the entreaties of his family. In 1806, Banks succeeded in sending a professional collector, William Kerr, to China, whence came the Tiger Lily (but I think Charles Lyte will find that Thunberg preceded William Kerr to *Lilium japonicum*).

Perhaps the most famous collecting voyage Banks directed was that of the Bounty. The gardeners on board, Nelson and Brown, were instructed to raise 1,000 breadfruit tree saplings on Tahiti, and the Bounty was then to take the trees to the West Indies as a future source of cheap food for the slaves in the sugar plantations. Once they were on board, however, the crew were accommodated in quarters far more cramped than anything Banks had had to suffer on the Endeavour; and, worse, the plants had to be constantly moved so that each received fresh air, their leaves had to be sponged with fresh water against the salt and their roots were watered so freely that there was not enough for the crew to drink. First overboard, assisted by Brown, went the plants.

Banks was an influential friend of

The entries are clear as well as concise and are often brought to life by extracts from contemporary sources. Complex and controversial events, such as the battle of Jutland, are fairly analysed, although it is surprising to find the prototype of the battleship, the *Invincible*, described as a mere cruiser. The authors rightly say that restrictions on space have made omissions inevitable, but their general methods of selection are admirable. Surely they were wrong, though, in not providing an entry for Julian Corbett, a better historian and a more subtle thinker than Mahan (who is included) and a British strategist who in his treatment of limited and amphibious warfare added a dimension to the theory of war neglected by Clausewitz.

The copious illustrations, line-drawings, coloured prints and photographs (the responsibility of Lionel Willis of the National Maritime Museum), are skillfully selected and reproduced.



half a century. He was an honorary director of Kew Gardens, and a one-man collecting and clearing house for plants and seeds from his own team of loyal collectors: Francis Mason, travelling in Southern Africa as far north as the Karroo, in North America, Spain, the Canaries, the Azores and the West Indies introduced hundreds of new species - heaths, pteridophytes, mesembryanthemums, lobellias, oaks, Arctostaphylos, a naval surgeon commissioned by Banks, brought back young plants of the Giant Redwood and the Monkey Puzzle tree. John Lettyard was sent to Russia; William Hooker went to Iceland but politely declined to go to Java, blaming the entreaties of his family. In 1806, Banks succeeded in sending a professional collector, William Kerr, to China, whence came the Tiger Lily (but I think Charles Lyte will find that Thunberg preceded William Kerr to *Lilium japonicum*).

Perhaps the most famous collecting voyage Banks directed was that of the Bounty. The gardeners on board, Nelson and Brown, were instructed to raise 1,000 breadfruit tree saplings on Tahiti, and the Bounty was then to take the trees to the West Indies as a future source of cheap food for the slaves in the sugar plantations. Once they were on board, however, the crew were accommodated in quarters far more cramped than anything Banks had had to suffer on the Endeavour; and, worse, the plants had to be constantly moved so that each received fresh air, their leaves had to be sponged with fresh water against the salt and their roots were watered so freely that there was not enough for the crew to drink. First overboard, assisted by Brown, went the plants.

Banks was an influential friend of

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